

## U.N. asked to condemn Israeli actions

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The General Assembly was asked Wednesday to condemn Israel's tough measures in the occupied territories, including an incident six days ago in the village of Nabatieh that caused several Palestinian deaths. A draft resolution circulated as the world body resumed debate on the continuing bloodshed would also condemn Israel for violating the "right of freedom of worship of the Palestinian people under occupation." The Security Council would also be asked to convene no later than April 27 to consider measures to protect Palestinian civilians. Zaki Labib Tarr, head of the Palestine Observer Mission, said in an address that the issue was brought to the assembly because one permanent member — the United States — would not permit even a statement critical of Israel to be issued by the council. He appealed to the American delegation — now led by Thomas Pickering, former ambassador to Israel — to stop pushing "the red light" that records negative votes. Past American "obduracy" in opposing resolutions dealing with the occupied territories — encouraged Israel's harsh response to the uprising, that began in December 1987, Tarr said. "We will continue in our struggle," he said.

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## Bush vows his utmost to meet Jordan's economic and military requirements King wins U.S. pledge to build serious peace process

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer with agency dispatches

WASHINGTON — His Majesty King Hussein and U.S. President George Bush Wednesday held talks on the Middle East and said after-

wards Jordan and the U.S. were launching the task of structuring a serious negotiating process for peace in the region.

Winding up an hour-long meeting at the White House, the King said Bush was "in a unique position" to help end the Arab-Israeli conflict, adding: "I can assure you that I fully support you in all your efforts in this regard."

Bush reaffirmed that Jordan's security remained of fundamental concern to the U.S. and said he had reassured the King that Washington would do "its utmost to help meet Jordan's economic and military requirements."

King Hussein praised Bush as "the right leader, in the right office at the right time" to move the peace process forward.

He earlier told reporters he believed the time was ripe for a breakthrough in the Middle East.

He reaffirmed the requirements for peace, including Israeli talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and a U.N.-sponsored international conference as a forum for negotiations on a comprehensive settlement.

Bush reiterated the U.S. view that "a properly structured international conference could serve at an appropriate time as a means to facilitate direct negotiations between the parties."

The King held a closed meeting with Bush before being joined by senior officials from both sides.

In his remarks at the White House Rose Garden, the King praised the U.S. for opening a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and said that this, coupled with the PLO's renunciation of terrorism in December, had improved prospects for peace.

He expressed hope for more flexibility on Israel's part. "Peace can neither be negotiated nor achieved without PLO participation," the King said.

Following is the text of Bush's statement: "Well, I've had the pleasure and honour of an intimate discussion with an old friend, His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan."

The relationship between Jordan and the United States has deep roots. It's founded on a commonality of interests and mutual respect, and it is in this spirit that His Majesty and I reviewed the situation in the Middle East, and in particular, the search for Arab-Israeli peace. We talked also about the concerns that we both have about Lebanon.

"Few individuals can match the dedication of His Majesty King Hussein to the cause of peace. For his is a commitment to explore opportunities, examine options, pursue possibilities. And I explained to him our thinking on the need to diffuse tensions, to promote dialogue, to foster the process of negotiations that could lead to a comprehensive settlement. And I reiterated my belief that properly designed and mutually acceptable elections could, as an initial step, contribute to a political process leading to negotiations on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza. I

also reaffirmed to His Majesty our long-standing commitment to bring about a comprehensive settlement through negotiations based on U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, and the principle of territory for peace.

"Through these negotiations, peace and security for Israel and all states and legitimate Palestinian political rights can be realised. In addition, a properly structured international conference could serve, at the appropriate time, as a means to facilitate direct negotiations between the parties.

"The time has come to encourage fresh thinking, to avoid sterile debate and to focus on the difficult but critical work of structuring a serious negotiating process. His Majesty committed Jordan to this task, and I commit the United States to this task. An important part of this effort and of the stability of the Middle East as a whole will be the continued economic and military strength of Jordan.

"Jordan's security remains of fundamental concern to the United States, and I have reassured His Majesty that the United States will do its utmost to help meet Jordan's economic and military requirements. His Majesty King Hussein and I delved deeply into the broader re-



HM King Hussein



George Bush

gional and internal problems, and as always, I benefited greatly from the wisdom of my friend. Together, we pledge to continue the close cooperation and coor-

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## Regent calls for constructive dialogue King: Everything under control in south Jordan

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein said Wednesday everything was under control in Jordan following the events that took place in southern Jordan in the past two days.

The King, asked at the White House by reporters to comment on the situation, said: "I believe everything is under control."

The events are "really the result of the measures that had to be taken as a result of the defaulting of several Arab states in helping us," the King said.

"We had to take some measures (to compensate for the aid loss) and obviously people feel them," the King added.

In Amman, a responsible source said Wednesday that certain events took place Tuesday and Wednesday in some cities in southern Jordan and were dealt with at the highest responsible level and with a national spirit on the part of the government and the citizens.

Both parties contained the event in the spirit of national awareness, the source said and added

that the economic measures were inevitable steps to protect the national economy. The source expressed absolute confidence in the citizens' awareness for ensuring the country's security and stability.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, held a meeting with the speaker and members of the Upper House of Parliament (Senate) and briefed them on the events and situation in the south, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said. The Regent called for a meeting of the four regional development committees to discuss the needs of the people, Petra said.

The Regent expressed understanding of the needs and problems of the people and called for a constructive dialogue in an atmosphere of calm and security.

Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Lawzi voiced the Senate's allegiance and loyalty to the King and reaffirmed the importance of protecting the security and stability of the country.

## Ministers explain results of Jordan-IMF talks, agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — The ministers of finance, supply and information met here Wednesday with a group of Jordanian writers, journalists and senior officials from the information sector to discuss the outcome of talks held in the past weeks between the Jordanian government and a team from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Participants in the meeting were briefed on the reasons behind the recent government decision to increase the price of a number of non-basic commodities.

Finance Minister Hanna Odeh reviewed Jordan's development process over the past years during which the Kingdom "registered" high growth levels compared with other countries in the region. During these years services were boosted, the

national economy was strengthened and production at all levels was increased, he said. Jordan's development over the past 10 years, the minister said, was closely connected with two factors: Arab financial assistance and external loans, both determined by outside forces.

The minister said strenuous efforts were exerted in the past years to increase the country's revenues but that the expenditure had constantly been on the increase and there was no way of reducing certain expenditures.

The country, he added, was involved in the execution of a number of major industrial programmes, and a clear pledge by the government to support the agricultural sector made a reduction on expenditure impossible.

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## Arab talks delayed until next week

# Explosive silence hangs over Beirut

BEIRUT (Agencies) — A mysterious silence hung over Beirut Wednesday as residents surveyed the wreckage of five weeks of fighting which has devastated large areas of Lebanon's capital.

But shell-shocked people feared the mysterious lull in artillery duels soon dawn Tuesday would soon disappear. Only the occasional shellburst broke the stillness.

"We don't know if we will sleep in our beds or stay in shell. It's nerve racking," said one Beirut.

At least 300 people have died and nearly 900 have suffered injuries in the worst fighting in Beirut in 14 years of civil war.

Angry Lebanese Christians marched in protest Wednesday against dovish members of parliament who called for a ceasefire in the fighting after five weeks of savage shelling that killed at least 231 people.

Major-General Michel Aoun, who heads a military government in the eastern sector, welcomed their protest, telling the 1,100 marchers his "war of liberation" demanded steadfastness, blood and sacrifice.

Tunis Friday. A spokesman in Tunis said the meeting would be held next Wednesday.

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, head of a six-man Arab League committee seeking a solution to the Lebanese conflict, told reporters in Kuwait some ministers were unable to attend because of prior commitments, and the meeting would now take place Tuesday or Wednesday.

"The postponement of the meeting causes us regret... we had wanted it to be held at the earliest possible moment," he said.

A hand grenade was thrown overnight at the home of Member of Parliament Edmond Rizk, who acted as a spokesman Tuesday for a group of 23 Christian deputies and read out their ceasefire appeal to reporters. No one was hurt in the attack.

The group's statement, welcomed by Muslim leaders on the other side of the green line, notably failed to back Aoun's demand that Syria withdraws its 40,000 troops from Lebanon and said that coexistence was the destiny of the Lebanese people.

The demonstrators in east Beirut denounced the dovish deputies, and burned a Syrian flag. Aoun also attacked the United States which has made clear it does not wish to intervene in Lebanon. "We're watching a Hollywood comedy played in Washington," he declared.

"When the United States says it cannot do anything against Syria it means Syria is a superpower that frightens the United States."

France said Wednesday it was stepping up diplomatic efforts to stop the slaughter in Lebanon and said other countries had cause to blush for being passive.

President Francois Mitterrand briefed his cabinet on a flurry of top-level contacts he has held this week on Lebanon.

"The president announced the continuation, in a determined fashion, of this diplomatic action in the coming days," Louis Le Penec, a minister who acts as cabinet spokesman, told reporters.

A senior official chided countries which had not joined France's efforts to stop the fighting.

"So far France is the only country which does not need to blush over what it has done," Hubert Vedrine, Mitterrand's spokesman, said in a radio interview.

In London, a British government minister called for an urgent ceasefire in Lebanon and said Western powers should work with Arab countries seeking to end the crisis.

"If this doesn't stop soon, there will be no Lebanon for anybody to govern," Foreign Office Minister William Waldegrave said in a BBC radio interview. "We are all begging that before the final apocalypse comes there is a pause."



A family braves the hell in Beirut shelling.

## 25 shot in fierce clash in occupied lands

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Soldiers shot and wounded at least 25 Palestinians in clashes Wednesday, including 11 children under age 12 who were hit by rubber and plastic bullets, most suffering head injuries in some of the fiercest clashes in the occupied Gaza Strip this year, hospital officials said.

In Jerusalem, police using a robot safely detonated a bomb on the main shopping street, planted during peak shopping hours on the eve of a Jewish holiday.

Police rounded up several suspects.

In Gaza City, and other areas of the teeming coastal strip, protesters burned tyres and barricaded roads from early morning apparently responding to a call by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) for a day of confrontation.

Hamas called in its 40th leaflet earlier as week for a "Day of confrontation and challenge and escalating resistance" marking the anniversary of the start of a 1936 Arab revolt against Jewish settlement in then British-ruled Palestine.

Among the wounded were a six-year-old boy shot in the head with a steel marble in Gaza City's Daraj neighbourhood, a six-year-old girl hit in the chest with a steel marble in the Nuseirat refugee camp and an eight-year-old boy with bullets in both legs in Khan Younis, hospital records showed.

At least 11 of the gunfire casualties were aged 12 or under, according to the records of three Gaza Strip hospitals.

The Gaza Strip, a bastion of Islamic fundamentalism, has experienced a wave of violence

since the fasting month of Ramadan began 12 days ago.

Palestinians said some of the clashes erupted when youths defied army curfews in refugee camps to stage street protests.

Many of the wounded were hit by plastic-tipped bullets or rubber-coated spherical steel marbles — ammunition introduced during the 16-month-old Palestinian uprising with the aim of enabling troops to fire more freely but kill fewer Arabs.

A curfew was put on Rafah town of the Egyptian border after a Palestinian stabbed a soldier in the shoulder, residents said.

The high casualties came amid accusations by the Red Cross and Amnesty International that Israeli troops were using excessive force and in some cases firing indiscriminately.

## Mubarak slams Shamir

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said in remarks published Wednesday that peace in the Middle East appeared impossible so long as Yitzhak Shamir remained prime minister of Israel.

"I see that the continuation of Mr. Shamir in his position, even the continuation of his presence, would make it difficult, even impossible, to reach a just solution or even push peace efforts in the right direction," Mubarak said in an interview with the weekly magazine Al Mawsawir.

Mubarak said both he and His Majesty King Hussein viewed Shamir's proposals for elections in the Israeli-occupied territories as a manoeuvre to avoid realistic peace negotiations.

"We both agree that it is nothing more than a glittering headline that disguises intentions of procrastination and complications," Mubarak was quoted as saying.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has said it would support elections only after Israeli forces withdrew from the occupied areas.

"I believe their (the PLO's) demand is right and we support their request," Mubarak said.

He told Mawsawir editor Makram Mohammad Ahmad that Shamir was wasting time. King Hussein, he said, would probably stress to Bush the importance of

holding an international peace conference with the equal participation of the PLO.

Asked if there was no hope for a just settlement while Shamir stayed in office, Mubarak replied:

"With regret, that is what I see and I hope I am wrong."

Mubarak said his hopes were pinned on what he called the peace forces within Israel, whom he said were intensifying their role in Israeli society.

In a newly published interview Shamir meanwhile suggested he would be willing to talk to supporters of the PLO in negotiations for an interim peace settlement, but repeated his longstanding refusal to talk to the organisation itself.

Shamir also indicated he could be flexible about American demands for foreign supervision in elections in the occupied territories as part of a peace plan he unveiled in Washington earlier this month.

A public opinion survey published by the newspaper showed 65 per cent of Israelis supported Shamir's plan.

ron contradicted government leaders to say the PLO was undergoing a serious change in attitude towards Israel and "terrorism."

"In the PLO they speak — I reiterate 'speak' since nothing yet has happened — but speak of recognising Israel and even renouncing terrorism."

"The fact they are discussing it is in itself a serious change," Shomron told army radio.

His remarks run counter to statement by Israeli leaders who insist there has been no change.

In the newspaper interview, Shamir insisted that the plan would not open the door to Israeli peace talks with the PLO.

"No, there cannot be any such negotiations. The PLO is not interested in peace negotiations. It is interested in only one thing: a Palestinian state," Shamir said.

Shamir also ruled out a possibility that the five-year period of self-rule he has proposed for the occupied territories could develop into a Palestinian state.

## Iran-Iraq peace talks resume today

GENEVA (Agencies) — Eight months to the day after the guns fell silent on the battlefield, Iran and Iraq launch a fresh round of peace talks under U.N. auspices Thursday.

But diplomats say their positions remain so wide apart on key issues that prospects for achieving a comprehensive and lasting settlement on the basis of a U.N. Security Council peace plan look as remote as ever.

Foreign Ministers Ali Akbar Velayati of Iran and Tariq Aziz of Iraq held two previous rounds of talks in Geneva last

year and met again in New York in February but made little progress towards turning the truce into peace.

U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar arrived here Wednesday to host the new round of peace talks as statements from both sides suggested that prospects for progress are bleak.

At an airport press conference, Perez de Cuellar agreed that the positions "are still rather far apart" but said it was important to keep the eight-month-old process going.

He declined to make any forecast but said the mere fact that the two ministers agreed to come to Geneva showed their "interest in finding a negotiated solution... the full implementation of (the U.N.) ceasefire Resolution 598."

Arriving earlier, Velayati declined to make any statement except to say "wait and see" when asked what he expected from the new round.

But upon leaving Tehran early Wednesday he made it plain that Iran would not yield in its demand that Iraq must first withdraw all its troops from Iranian territory if the

negotiations were to be unblocked.

Aziz, due here Wednesday evening, accused Iran Tuesday of sabotaging the talks by "procrastination, manoeuvring and insincerity" and warned that the negotiations "could eventually collapse."

The only progress achieved to date has been the release of a limited number of wounded prisoners of war (PoWs).

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said recently that during eight years of war just over 1,300 wounded, sick or elderly PoWs were released under its auspices.







## U.S. increases aid to NMI

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Wednesday endorsed an agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under which the latter will increase its assistance to the National Medical Institution (NMI) to \$250,000, up from \$100,000.

The funds will be used by the NMI for health planning programmes. The Cabinet also decided that Jordan should take part in a meeting by Arab ministers of labour which will be held in Geneva on June 5 before the start of the 76th meeting of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Jordan will be represented at the ILO meeting by Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Khaled Al Haj Hassan who will be accompanied by two officials from the Ministry of Labour.

According to a statement Wednesday, the Council of Ministers also approved an international agreement reached at an international meeting in the Swiss city of Basel last month on dumping of perilous waste. It also empowered Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Marwan Hmoud to sign the document on behalf of Jordan. Hmoud attended the meeting in Basel along with delegates from different countries.

The statement said that the Cabinet approved of an agreement on cooperation in sports and youth affairs with Egypt for the years 1989, 1990 and 1991. The agreement aims to deepen relations between the two countries in these fields, and paves the way for an exchange of visits by officials and sports teams and youth groups from either country. The Council also approved of a similar agreement with Syria which was concluded during a visit by the minister of youth and to Damascus last month.

## Tunisian fair opens today

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Tunisian industrial fair will open in Amman Thursday and will last until the end of April, according to press reports here Wednesday. The reports said that the fair, the fourth of its kind to be held in Jordan, will display a variety of goods including foodstuffs, clothing, home appliances, electric equipment, scents, cosmetics, and traditional crafts.

According to the reports the 10-day fair will allow members of the public to buy directly in accordance with an agreement between the Tunisian and Jordanian governments.

In June Jordan plans to hold its fourth industrial fair in the Tunisian capital, displaying a variety of national products.

Ministry of Industry and Trade officials said that the Jordanian fair in Tunis will be allowed to sell \$2.5 million worth of products to the public.

Last year, Tunisia held a 10-day fair at the Greater Amman Municipality building, displaying national products and selling directly to the public.

Agreement on holding fairs in Tunis and Amman was reached during talks here by a Tunisian delegation which visited Jordan in January 1989. The two sides also discussed the work of the Jordanian and Tunisian trade centres in Amman and Tunis.

## Arabs exhibit at Seville

TUNIS (Petra) — Jordan will be among 12 Arab countries which will take part in an international exhibition that will be held in the Spanish city of Seville to mark the 500-year anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, according to Jordan's Ambassador to Tunisia Sataan Al Hassan.

Hassan said that the Arab countries' participation in the exhibition is designed as a show of the strong economic, political and cultural relations between the Arab World and Spain, and to underline the role of the Arab and Muslim culture and its influence on Spain and the European continent until the 15th century A.D.

He said that the Arab countries' participation is bound to help expose Israel's attempts to distort Arab culture, and to put an end to Zionist ambitions in the Arab World.

Hassan, who heads an Arab committee coordinating affairs related to the Arab World's participation in the coming exhibition, said that Arab countries will be represented at one great pavilion and the displayed items will reflect the Arab and Islamic heritage and relations with Spain over the centuries.

According to Hassan, the following Arab countries will take part in the exhibition: Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Oman, Algeria, Mauritania, and the United Arab Emirates.

## WHO team briefed on occupied lands

### Malhas: Palestinian deprived Qatanani: Hospitals stormed

AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Zubair Malhas told a World Health Organisation (WHO) mission now on a visit to Jordan that more than a million Palestinians are suffering from deprivation and oppression under Israeli occupation rule, and their health condition is deteriorating due to lack of proper health facilities.

Malhas said that the Israeli authorities demolished 25,000 Arab homes over the past 20 years of its occupation of Arab territories and took measures designed to aggravate the health conditions of Arab citizens under its rule.

The WHO fact-finding team which arrived here Tuesday evening on a two-day visit to Jordan heard the minister giving details about the fast deteriorating health situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israel's violations of people's human rights and their actions that contradict the WHO's principles.

The minister also spoke about the condition of Arab children who, he said, are exposed to Israeli soldiers' bullets, beating, and are deprived of the right to food, vaccination and hospitalisation. Malhas also referred to the deteriorating conditions in Israeli jails where thousands of Arab citizens are being held. He gave details about Israel's inhuman practices against Arab hospitals, clinics and ambulances that provide treatment to the Palestinian people.

The WHO mission later met with the President of the Jordanian Medical Association Mamdouh Al Abbadi who said that Israel continues to ban the establishment of Arab hospitals in the occupied territories. He referred to the closure of a number of clinics and hospitals since the 1967 war.

The ongoing intifada has resulted in a great number of injured people; and there is great need at present for doctors, medical supplies and health and medical facilities in the occupied areas, Abbadi noted. He said that many Arab physicians and specialists have been detained by the Israeli authorities to stop them from providing medical assistance to the Palestinian people.

## More difficult times expected

### Price adjustment force people to adjust

By Najwa Najjar  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Following the recent price increases of several goods and services, most Jordanians say that they have been affected substantially, according to a limited survey conducted by the Jordan Times.

The survey, a random sample of people from different social classes of Jordanian men and women in the 20-60 age range, found that Jordanians expect difficult times ahead.

Those items with a price hike, which could be cut from the individual's life such as cigarettes, alcohol, soft drinks and telephone calls were cut. People have already reduced allocations for these items from their budgets.

One supermarket employee has cut down to one pack of cigarettes a week instead of his usual two to three packs. A secretary at the university of Jordan used to smoke a pack of cigarettes a day, she has now decided that one a week is enough.

A columnist said in passing that he will be hesitant to serve alcohol at home. "Guests will probably get a glass of lemonade," he said.

A newly married secretary said that due to the increase in prices of soft drinks, "I think water is the best drink." Her friend has already asked for the "O" hole in his telephone set to be removed, so that all international calls must be routed through the operator, "lessening the temptation to call outside frequently."

But, what about the commodities that Jordanians cannot afford to live without: Petrol, solar, kerosene, fuel oil, detergents, whose prices were considerably increased. Most interviewees said they would have to make up for the price difference by eliminating other items.

A bank employee said, "buying clothes is definitely now out of the question." While a stone cutter suggested that instead of buying new clothes, "I will now have to buy clothes for my children from the second-hand stores."

A housewife said that she needed "double the amount of money" to buy the same amount of goods for her home. "Before, I used to buy items needed or not.

Now, I buy, not only the necessary items, but I check the prices to see, which is the cheaper brand."

Two civil servants pointed out that trips to the hairdressers and drycleaners would lessen considerably. One civil servant said, "what scares me is that the rise in prices while wages remain constant may threaten the education system."

He explained that some families may find a tawjihi level of education sufficient for their children, since university fees may "sap them of the funds necessary for survival."

A messenger said that he could not afford to buy the supplementary milk for his three-month baby, and that the baby must now derive all its nutrition from its mother's milk.

A student said, "we can't buy tomatoes now because it is too expensive, so we do without it."

But, the farmer who has to pay six times more for his irrigation water said with dismay that even if he did eliminate other goods from his life, his crops need the same amount of water he used previously. "We cannot use less water because the vegetation needs a certain amount, and must receive that amount regardless of the price of water." This will eventually lead to higher prices for fruits and vegetables, commented an ambassador.

An employee of a private company was also disheartened as she noted that people in Jordan could not do without some of the essentials with a price hike. "We have to buy solar and gas. What are we supposed to do, freeze in winter or stop cooking? or stop driving our cars? ...We can't consider such items luxury goods."

One particular daily labourer, who makes four to five dinars a day, believes the day will come when he and his family will go hungry. "How can I afford to pay rent, pay for fuel and feed my wife and two children?" he asked.

His working partner, an Egyptian, said that not only do they have to pay to survive, but why "one Jordanian dinar as television tax when I do not even have a television?"

He plans to return to Egypt "I have no other choice. I came to Jordan to save money, now the situation is the opposite."



Speaker of Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Lawzi (centre) Wednesday receives a European parliamentary delegation (Petra photo)

## Europarlamentarians denounce elections under occupation

AMMAN (Petra) — The head of a visiting European parliamentary team Wednesday denounced Israel's call for elections in the occupied West Bank as a step designed to find substitutes for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO); and said that it was not a realistic move.

The group leader said that the meeting with Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi and House members. The meeting reviewed the general conditions of the Palestinian people under Israeli rule and Israel's daily atrocities and repressive measures against the Palestinian people. Addressing the visitors, Lawzi said that Israel remains the only party that continues to reject peace bids, a withdrawal of Israeli troops from Arab lands and the recognition of the Palestinian people's rights.

Lawzi told the group members who are on a current fact finding tour of the region and an investigation of the situation in the occupied territories, that Jordan has been seeking a just and durable settlement based on exchanging land for peace and the restoration of the Palestinian people's rights.

Referring to Jordan's decision to sever legal and administrative links with the West Bank, Lawzi said that the move was designed to enable the Palestinians to shoulder their own responsibilities and to enhance their identity. Jordan, he said, will continue to extend all possible support to the Palestinians to enable them to regain their national rights.

Lawzi said that Europe and the Middle East are closely linked through various interests and cultural and historical relations. He urged European parliament and governments to play a more effective role in bringing about a just and comprehensive peace. The meeting took place soon after the arrival here of the group's members from a visit to the occupied Arab lands which lasted two days.

## 1988 profit JD 1 million

### IJLTC board meets

AMMAN (Petra) — The board of directors of the Iraq-Jordan Land Transport Company (IJLTC) Wednesday met here to discuss the company's general budget and last year's final accounts, as well as plans and programmes for 1989.

In its two-day meeting the board will discuss plans to control and rationalise spending, a report on production in the first quarter of 1989, and the company's operations between Aqaba and Baghdad, as well as the company's participation in transporting Jordanian phosphates from the mines to the port city of Aqaba.

Jamil Ibrahim, the company's director general, said in a statement here that the company last year realised a JD 1 million profit, and nearly JD 667,000 profit in the first three months of 1989.

Since last February, the company began manufacturing 59 types of spare parts needed for its vehicles, a project which will be expanded and strengthened. The company which was established in 1980 has its workshops in Aqaba to provide maintenance work to the 900 vehicle fleet. The company has a capital of \$50 million shared equally between Jordan and Iraq. Its vehicle transport passengers and goods, mostly between Iraq and Jordan.

The Iraqi delegation to the meeting earlier met with Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Khaled Al Haj Hassan to discuss means of promoting bilateral cooperation in transport fields.

## Cultural festival

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian community colleges will organise a cultural festival on April 22 in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.

A report in the local press said that Minister of Culture Mohammad Hammouri will open the festival which will feature plays by Jordanian playwrights. The report said that the week-long festival will be held at the Royal Cultural Centre; and all sessions will take place at eight in the evening.

## Amman City Orchestra gives anniversary concert

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Amman City Orchestra, a group of Jordanian and expatriate musicians, will give a concert Thursday to mark the first anniversary of its establishment, according to an announcement. The orchestra, an affiliate of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation's National Music Conservatory (NMC), will play works by Offenbach, Verdi, Haydn, Beethoven, Rimsky-Korsakov and others at the Amman Baccalaureate School theatre.

From the very beginning, the NMC extended much support to the orchestra in the form of rehearsal facilities, instruments and music. This support was later strengthened when the orchestra formally became an NMC affiliate.

The orchestra made its debut in a pool-side concert at the Marriott Hotel on June 30, 1988. The programme, which included six works, was well-received and much appreciated by the 350-strong enthusiastic audience.

The orchestra includes five flute players, one oboist, four clarinet players, five trumpeters, two trombones, two percussion players, one pianist, nine violinists, one viola player and one double bass player. They include 14 expatriates and 17 Jordanians, of whom some are expatriates married to Jordanians. The orchestra welcomes any musicians wishing to join.

Rehearsals take place every Monday evening at 7.15 at the National Music Conservatory.

## Fadia Mouasher excels

AMMAN (J.T.) — The international division of Marriott Corporation has announced that Miss Fadia Mouasher, sales manager at the Amman Marriott Hotel has won their prestigious award for "Outstanding Sales Person — 1st Quarter, 1989."

Mr. Bloch, senior vice president, sales and marketing, Marriott Corporation was quoted as saying, "Miss Mouasher has won this award with full merit and also holds the distinction of being the first woman in the international division of Marriott's more than 200 hotels worldwide to hold this honour."

As well, Miss Mouasher is the first woman in the Arab World to reach this outstanding achievement.

Fadia Mouasher, receiving the Award Plaque for Outstanding Sales Person, 1st Quarter, 1989, from Messrs Frank Keenan, general manager and Jan Heesbeen, director of sales and marketing, of the Amman Marriott Hotel.



## NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

**TRAFFIC DAY:** Balqa governorate is preparing for the celebrations of the World Traffic Day and the Arab Traffic Week, which will be held on May 14. The governorate will distribute posters, bulletins and fix road signs to aware people of the need to adhere to the traffic rules. Also in Karak, preparations are underway to mark the two occasions on May 4. Karak Governor Mohammad Hussein Al Shobaki stressed the need for putting an end to the road accidents, organising traffic and finding suitable solutions to avoid traffic jams (Petra).

**ECONOMY:** Industry and Trade Minister Hamdi Tabbaa Tuesday discussed with chairman and members of the board of the Jordan Brick Industries a number of issues of interest to the company, with the aim of helping it play an active role in supporting national economy. Tabbaa also met with Greater Amman Mayor Abdul Ra'ouf Al Rawabdeh and reviewed with him scopes of cooperation between the ministry and Amman Municipality (Petra).

**THEATRE:** Under the patronage of Minister of Culture and National Heritage Mohammad Hammouri, the Intermediate University College, in cooperation with the ministry, holds its second theatre festival for the community colleges in Jordan, during the period April 22-30. The festival, which will be entitled "towards a developed Jordanian theatre," will be held at the Royal Cultural Centre (Al Ra'i).

**HEALTH INSURANCE:** An adhoc committee in charge of drawing up a health insurance scheme for civil servants and the military, who are insured in accordance with a government insurance plan, has drafted the new regulation and will submit it to the Prime Ministry for debate and approval. The committee groups representatives for the Ministry of Health and the National Medical Insurance (Al Dustour).

**GAS:** The recent increase in the prices of gas is not attributable to a world price rise, but to contribute towards reducing the government budget, according to a responsible source in the Natural Resources Authority. The source added that the gas found recently at Al Rishah area needs treatment before it becomes suitable for household consumption (Al Dustour).

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

**EXHIBITIONS**

- ★ An art exhibition displaying paintings by children at the Housing Bank Complex.
- ★ An art exhibition by French artist Jean-Francois Noble at Haya Arts Centre.
- ★ An art exhibition by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at the Royal Cultural Centre.

**RAMADAN SOUQ**

- ★ Ramadan open-air market, which includes foodstuffs, clothes, home appliances and children's toys at Mahatta, eastern Amman.
- ★ International Ramadan Souq, in which 14 Arab and Islamic countries are taking part, at the International Auto Centre, Queen Alia International Airport Highway.

**FILMS**

- ★ Two Iraqi films shown as part of the Iraqi Cultural Week: The first entitled "An Iraqi Wedding," Thursday, and the other entitled "4/6," Friday, at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ A feature film entitled "Rampelstok" at the American Centre — 4:40 p.m.



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HOTEL JORDAN INTER-CONTINENT



## Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975

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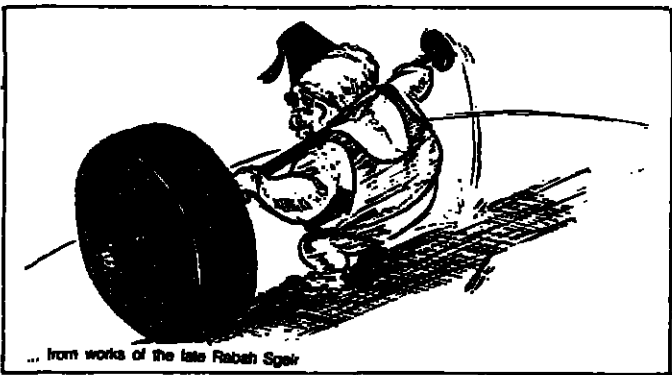
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## Patience

THE disturbances in some cities and towns in southern Jordan Tuesday demonstrate that what concerns the average citizen most is how to take care of his bread and butter issues rather than head macroeconomic and fiscal policies as sound and proper as they are. It will be recalled that the agreement reached between Jordan and the International Monetary Fund necessitated the application of a string of economic and financial measures which in their cumulative effect caused rises in prices of commodities that touch the daily lives of Jordanians. There is a consensus in the country and outside it, however, that the medicine prescribed to Jordan to heal its fiscal and economic woes is indispensable albeit it hit the pockets of some consumers in a biting way. The avowed aim of the remedial programme of action is to cut expenses and increase revenues for the state. No one can quarrel with these legitimate objectives. What was perhaps missing in the composition of the prescribed medicine is a built-in mechanism to ease the hardships that naturally ensue to some consumers from the application of the corrective measures. It is common knowledge that the average man on the street thinks simplistically and pragmatically about economic and business matters. For example, if transport costs would have to be biked up because of increases in the prices of gasoline, he or she would want to know how to get that extra income to pay for such an increase in transport costs. And from the vantage point of the average consumer, what applies to gasoline should apply to other services and commodities as well. The crux of the issue, therefore, is how to reconcile between two clearly legitimate and reasonable concerns, namely, the need to correct the economic and fiscal paths of the country while at the same time protecting the average and the underprivileged citizen from creeping inflation.

The government is clearly trying very hard to accommodate the two goals. The best evidence of this is its insistence, in spite of strong IMF and economists' advice to the contrary, to maintain subsidies to basic food staples to the tune of JD 66 million. There are strong arguments in favour of extending the list of what constitutes basic requirements of life in Jordan to cover such foods as milk and meat and such commodities as heating and cooking fuel. An alternative to subsidies could be the introduction of some cost of living adjustment schemes for low income groups among Jordanians. A scale of salaries and incomes can be devised for this purpose at bearable cost to the country.

Meanwhile all Jordanians must bear in mind that while not all of our economic and financial problems would vanish in five years, which is the duration of the Jordanian-IMF agreement, most of them will; and by then, we all in Jordan stand to recover the prosperity that fumbled. A little patience is therefore in order.



## JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i daily said Wednesday that Jordanian people can and must overcome the present circumstances and adapt to the new situation and the difficult time they are going through. It said that with vigilance and perseverance, and with determination the Jordanian family had proved able to cope with difficult situations in the past and took share in supporting the government's measures designed to stimulate the economy and control spending. The rise in prices of certain commodities and the government's economic measures were deemed necessary under the present circumstances, and all citizens should take their share in shouldering the responsibility to boost the national economy, the paper noted. It said that Jordan is going through a difficult stage along with the other countries in the region, but it is confident that its people will overcome the present difficulties.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily comments on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's refusal to withdraw his troops from the occupied Arab territories to pave the way for elections. Mahmoud Rimawi says that Shamir also refuses to involve the people of Jerusalem in the coming elections because he claims they are subject to Israeli law since the city was annexed by Israel after the 1967 war. According to the writer, Shamir also refuses any form of international supervision on the elections, and demands that the intifada should stop before any elections can be held under Israeli law. But he says that Shamir and the Israelis are not to be trusted, and he recalls the election of the Arab mayors who were later killed or evicted from their homes. The writer notes that while Shamir was in America trying to convince the world that the elections were good for the Arabs his troops were stepping up their atrocities against the Palestinian Arabs who, he claims, will benefit from the elections. Clearly, the writer says, the Israeli government is trying to deceive the world's public opinion with contradicting statements and actions.

Al Dastour daily tackles King Hussein's visit to the United States and his efforts to bring about peace to the Middle East. The King's visit assumes significance and importance as it comes in the midst of a new American diplomatic activity to find a settlement for the Palestine issue, the paper noted. It said that Washington is currently in touch with the PLO in Tunis and with its European allies with the aim of promoting the march towards peace. The paper said that Jordan looks with optimism towards the American moves, despite the current difficulties and complexities; and hopes that the U.S. administration will maintain its present concern over the situation in our region and will work hard to end Israel's occupation of Palestinian land.

# Any way out for Lebanon?

By P.V. Vivekanand

FOR the past several years political pundits, Western as well as Arab, have been advocating that a solution to the Lebanese imbroglio should originate from the Lebanese themselves and any outside interference would only further aggravate the factional strife that plagued the country for decades. But, the ferocious battles that the Lebanese witnessed since March 14 have proved beyond any doubt that Lebanon is further than ever from making an attempt at making peace with itself. If anything, the same Lebanese leaders who repeatedly issued "hands-off-our-country" warnings are now looking frantically outside, seeking help to end the conflict. Sure enough, takers are many; as is evident in the flurry of international dialogue that the French president, Francois Mitterrand, has launched with the leaders of the big powers as well as the Arab World. Moscow is in touch with Syria; Washington is consulting the rightists entrenched in east Beirut; the Arab League Council is holding an emergency session; the U.N. secretary-general has declared Lebanon as the top priority in his agenda. Wires are burning among Arab capitals on how to approach the issue.

It may seem premature at this point in time to judge what could come out of an international/Arab effort over Lebanon since all parties involved in the conflict appear to have thrown all they have into a once-and-for-all confrontation. Seen in this light it may not be presumptuous to see the latest flare-up, the fiercest yet in Lebanon's living history, as a turning point in the conflict since it may very well signal the beginning of the end to the

protracted factional strife.

Having said that, one cannot easily ignore the deep wounds that the frantic violence has left behind. The devastated buildings that now provide a nightmarish backdrop to the once-beautiful Lebanese capital could be repaired and rebuilt; but what about the scars that the violence inflicted on the life of almost everyone in Lebanon — whether Lebanese or otherwise? Will the Lebanese be able to forget and forgive those responsible for the violent death of the dozens of thousands dear and near to them? Only the Lebanese can answer this question; and the answer better be affirmative, since there lies the only key to a resurrected Lebanon.

The sheer nature of the Lebanese conflict — the empty sense of righteousness and "an-eye-for-an-eye-and-a-tooth-for-a-tooth" rivalry — warrants that it should be tackled, rightly or not, by Arabs themselves. That is not to say that international efforts should be spurned. On the contrary, the non-Arab parties — large and small — should throw their weight behind the Arab League effort and adopt a neutral stand over the basic conflict, dissuading all — the Israelis foremost — to stay put. No one needs to remind the international community that Lebanese strife was fanned into full blaze by the festering Palestinian problem and a total end to it could only come through a comprehensive solution of the fundamental Arab-Israeli conflict.

It is not an enviable task that lies ahead of the Arab leaders since the scenario involves a direct linkage between the basic

Middle East conflict and the Lebanese problem and this linkage should be driven home to the international community, whose leaders have been issuing repeated statements of concern and alarm over the mushrooming violence in Palestine as well as Lebanon. If their concern is indeed genuine, then it is time for the world leaders to accept the fact that Lebanon would never see the rays of peace as long as the Palestinian question is left unresolved.

Seen in this light, the postponement of the Arab League Council's meeting until next week from this Friday indicates a deep awareness of the seriousness of the responsibilities that the Arab League has to shoulder in tackling the Lebanese situation. The stage has to be set for a no-holds barred discussion of the issues involved before the council could meet.

Needless to say, it will not exactly be a picnic for the Arab leaders, whether meeting in the Maghreb or Mashrek, since a turn to settling differences in the best interests of the Arab World needs long-term vision — something which some Arab leaders appear to shun, as was seen in past efforts at reconciliation through understanding of the common Arab aspirations.

There is little doubt that an effort to resolve the Lebanese conflict with any chance of success could only be launched from a strong, no-nonsense Arab platform after order has been restored to the Arab house, thus making it clear in no ambiguous terms to the foreign powers that inter-Arab differences are no longer an element in the Lebanese strife and the Lebanese waters are no longer too murky to fish around.

## SWAPO seeks to bolster image after incursion

By Laurinda Keys

The Associated Press

WINDHOEK, Namibia — Leaders of the legal, internal wing of Namibia's guerrilla movement were addressing a rally on April 1, saying the insurgents had done their job and now civilian supporters should do theirs by working to win independence elections.

But the guerrillas weren't finished. They weren't waiting in their camps in Angola for an orderly, unarmed return to Namibia in May. Hundreds were crossing the border, with weapons, in the largest incursion of their 23-year war for independence from South Africa.

The result was more than 275 guerrillas killed by security forces, one of SWAPO's worst defeats at a time when it sought to show itself as a victorious liberator.

Daniel Tjongarero, national chairman of the South-West Africa People's Organisation, says he doesn't yet know why such action

was taken, but he isn't overly worried about its impact on the elections.

"Politicians can explain anything," he said in an interview. Explanations from SWAPO's external leaders have varied: From denial that there was an incursion, to a claim that guerrillas entered to protect Namibia-based comrades who were attacked by South Africans, to a widely rejected argument that SWAPO units were entitled to go to bases in Namibia on April 1 — even though no such bases existed.

Namibians wonder why such risky action was taken on the day a United Nations plan was implemented that would have brought independence after November elections that SWAPO was favoured to win.

SWAPO's opponents, and South African officials, suggest SWAPO began to fear the exposure of a political campaign. But even the heavy guerrilla losses and the near-collapse of the independence plan may not cut very far into SWAPO's political sup-

port. "Let's wait to see the outcome of the election. That will tell whether people are angry with SWAPO," Tjongarero said.

He is anxious to go north to Ovambo land, the site of the fighting and the major source of SWAPO support. "We have to do a damage assessment," he said.

He said the attitude of Ovambo residents will depend on what the guerrillas have been telling the people — what purpose they had in coming.

Civilians also would be influenced by the impact the fighting had on them, Tjongarero said.

As soon as security force units were deployed to combat the incursion, residents reported renewed harassment. Villagers pointed to chewed-up fields and flattened huts after armoured vehicles crashed through the bush tracking the guerrillas.

"Namibians might think this was a treacherous act by the South Africans, to attack the guerrillas who weren't even pre-

pared to fight," Tjongarero said. Internationally, the task of repairing SWAPO's image may be tougher than inside Namibia.

"We have to go out in the world and explain to people who have been supportive," Tjongarero said. "One has to accept that the South Africans took the media in very effectively. What ever confusions there were, they have jumped on them in a deliberate attempt to taint SWAPO's image."

The overseas image is important. SWAPO was expecting aid from Nordic, East bloc and African countries, and from humanitarian groups, to match aid SWAPO opponents may get from South Africans.

In a campaign in which SWAPO will want to convince whites that their futures are secure, the organisation may be hurt by the impression that it does not keep commitments.

Also unsettling is the image of a disorganised external leadership that apparently made a

major military decision without knowing the situation inside Namibia.

"Anyone who sends an army across an international border, and then a week later calls it back, has a screw loose," said top Western diplomat after SWAPO's allies, the Angolans and Cubans, forced SWAPO President Sam Nujoma to recall his fighters.

Many guerrillas apparently were caught by surprise, gathering in large groups, in full uniform, as if they expected to be escorted to bases supervised by U.N. monitoring forces. If that was the case, the fighters were tragically misinformed by their commanders.

"We assume the people (outside the country) might not have known that the United Nations transition assistance group was not fully deployed," Tjongarero said.

SWAPO has an office at the United Nations. If its leaders

believed the U.N. had bases in Namibia for guerrillas to go to, why did no one find out where those bases were?

SWAPO officials had 11 years to resolve doubts about the 1978 U.N. plan, but they expressed surprise that paramilitary police units were still patrolling on April 1. U.N. resolution 435 allows this during the transition to independence.

The resolution required combatants to be in bases on April 1. South African army units complied and SWAPO did not, a situation that gave South Africa a huge public relations boost.

SWAPO's external foreign secretary, Theo Ben-Gurirab, said South Africa knew guerrillas were gathering on the border and prepared an ambush of them.

It may never be known who fired first. But no ambush could have happened if SWAPO hadn't crossed the border.

"One has to accept that we did play into their hands," Tjongarero said.

## Ethiopian rebels change the face of their society

By Eric Onstad

Reuter

ABI ADI, Ethiopia — Alganesh Behre was forced into marriage as a frightened nine-year-old girl. "He was 28 years old. At age 14 I was divorced and started working as a housemaid," she recalls without emotion.

Today, thanks partly to Alganesh, girls are protected from such early marriage in rebel-held Abi Adi, where the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has encouraged women to break out of their traditional roles.

They are serving as rebel soldiers or taking a more active part in community life.

Alganesh, 34, is one of three founding women members of the local council organised by the TPLF in the small town of Abi Adi. This council, known as a *baito*, runs schools and other local services. It has set the age of marriage for girls at 14 and imposes fines and prison sentences on parents who break the rule.

The left-wing rebel movement took up arms in 1975 in Ethiopia's northern Tigray province during the turmoil which followed the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie.

Its object is to create a nationwide movement to bring down the government of President Mengistu Haile Mariam.

Although the TPLF embraces Marxism, as does the government in Addis Ababa, it accuses the president of perpetuating the Amhara ethnic group's long-standing grip on power in Ethiopia.

The three million people of Tigray mainly belong to the Tigrinya ethnic group, a traditional rival of the Amharas. The TPLF has controlled most of rural Tigray since the early 1980s and after a series of battles in February captured virtually the entire province, including the capital Mekele.

Abi Adi has been in rebel hands for five of the last seven years and Alganesh said the rebel takeover changed her life.

"Women were suppressed. We were never seen in public meetings, we had no political rights," she said.

Draped in a white shawl which leaves the cross-shaped *wikato* ritual tattoo on her forehead uncovered, Alganesh said she had remarried a man of her own choice.

As a councillor she voted to raise the minimum marriage age to 14 for women and 22 for men, although she and other members suggested that 14 was too young

for a girl to marry.

Change comes slowly even in the TPLF — only one member of its newly-elected 35-member central committee is a woman.

But the ideal of equality is strongly pursued by the armies of the TPLF and its ally the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) in neighbouring Eritrea province.

The EPLF, fighting for the independence of the former Italian colony on the Red Sea, and the TPLF both say that a third of their fighters are women.

"The men can see in practice and the political education they were getting that men and women are equal," said Bessrat G'Selasie, a 24-year-old TPLF fighter who joined the rebels 10 years ago as an orphan.

Tigrayan women accustomed to traditional roles are intrigued by female TPLF fighters marching past peasant homesteads and into towns, Bessrat said, a Kalashnikov rifle slung over her shoulder, hand grenades strapped to her waist.

"When they see me with a gun they get excited. When I talk to them they ask me how I can do it," she said.

The Ethiopian government pursues an official policy of equality for women, but has had limited success in transforming traditional rural society.

The rebel movements have always been based in the countryside and their social influence is much stronger.

TPLF officials said some peasants initially resisted the liberation of women, but opposition faded when the rebel movement began distributing land formerly held by feudal landlords.

In Abi Adi, the TPLF distributed land to 7,000 families, abolished the peasants' longstanding obligation to hand over three quarters of their harvest to the landlord and allowed them to sell all their food surplus on the free market.

The Ethiopian government has distributed land to peasants in areas it controls, but has obliged peasants to sell much of their

produce through a state-controlled marketing system at fixed and often artificially low prices.

The TPLF says its free-market system has aided the distribution of grain which peasants previously hid from the government.

The highlands of Tigray are overpopulated and the TPLF encourages peasants to move to vacant fertile land in the western lowlands near the Sudanese border in a programme which parallels the government's own resettlement scheme.

The government aims to move 1.5 million people from the northern highlands to new settlements in the south and west, but the TPLF has accused it of using the programme to empty the Tigrayan countryside of rebel supporters.

The people of Abi Adi are uninterested in resettlement. Alganesh said townsfolk and peasants were rebuilding Abi Adi's health clinic, bombed three times since 1984, and planning to reopen seven primary schools run by the *baito*.



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## EN BREF

### La loi électorale modifiée

La chambre des députés de Jordanie comptera dorénavant 72 sièges, en vertu de l'amendement à la loi électorale approuvé samedi dernier par décret royal et rendu nécessaire par la rupture des liens administratifs et juridiques avec la Cisjordanie, le 30 juillet 1988. Le nouveau texte supprime également les 11 sièges de députés réservés aux 11 camps de réfugiés palestiniens du Royaume, désormais intégrés aux circonscriptions électorales. Bien qu'elle abrite près de la moitié de la population totale du pays, la ville d'Amman ne sera représentée que par 8 élus, soit le double seulement de Salt. Le décret du roi Hussein modifie la loi de 1986, jamais entrée en vigueur, qui prévoyait 142 députés pour les deux rives. L'amendement ne fixe aucune date pour de nouvelles élections parlementaires.

### Don de 5 millions de dollars à Amman

La Communauté économique européenne (CEE) a offert mardi 4 millions d'euros (près de 5 millions de dollars) à la Jordanie pour un projet d'étude de ses ressources et de ses capacités agricoles. L'accord a été signé à Amman par le ministre jordanien du Plan, M. Taher Kamran, et le représentant de la CEE dans le royaume hachémite, M. Christian Falkowski.

### La "Palestine" à l'heure d'été

Les dirigeants de l'intifada ont décrété samedi soir l'entrée en vigueur de l'heure d'été dans les territoires occupés. Soit deux semaines plus tôt qu'en Israël, où cette mesure ne sera appliquée que le 30 avril. Dans un communiqué, la "direction unifiée" du soulèvement a appelé les "habitants de l'Etat de Palestine" de Gaza et de Cisjordanie à avancer leurs pendules d'une heure (soit temps universel plus trois).

### Solidarité légalisée

Le syndicat polonais Solidarité a été légalisé lundi par le tribunal régional de Varsovie, en présence de centaines de militants et de sympathisants du mouvement, dirigé par Lech Walesa. Créé en 1980, Solidarité avait été interdit lors de la proclamation de l'état de siège, le 13 décembre 1981, par le général Jaruzelski. La régularisation du syndicat avait été décidée au cours de la "table ronde" organisée du 6 février au 5 avril entre le pouvoir et l'opposition.

### Projet de pont sur le golfe d'Aqaba

L'arabisation du pont routier entre l'Egypte et l'Arabie Saoudite enjambant le golfe d'Aqaba refait surface. Le projet va en effet être relancé après la visite au Caire du roi Fahd. Selon une première étude effectuée en 1982 par une commission technique égyptienne, l'ouvrage relierait le sud du Sinaï à la côte saoudienne, en passant par l'île de Tiran. Le tronçon le plus important serait constitué d'un pont suspendu d'environ 7 kilomètres de long.

### Nouveau parti en Algérie

Le "Parti national algérien" (PNA) a annoncé sa création dimanche à Alger. Cette association à caractère politique s'est présentée comme étant de tendance libérale. Selon son porte-parole, le PNA s'est d'ores et déjà doté d'un "programme complet", capable de répondre aux problèmes de l'Algérie.

### Un gâteau d'anniversaire de 1250 kilos

Le roi Mswati III du Swaziland a fêté, hier, ses 21 ans autour d'un gâteau d'anniversaire de 1250 kilos. Un gâteau confectionné en deux semaines par une pâtisserie sud-africaine et composé de 15 morceaux de un mètre de long sur 50 centimètres de haut. Tout juste suffisant pour nourrir les quelques 4000 invités...

### Un Van Gogh Volé aux Pays-Bas réapparaît

Quatre mois après le plus important vol de tableaux jamais commis aux Pays-Bas, une des trois toiles de Vincent Van Gogh, dérobées le 12 décembre au musée national Kroeller Muller, a été retrouvée dans une voiture en stationnement devant le logement du directeur du musée Kroeller Muller. Il s'agit de la toile baptisée "Tisserand avec meuble à tisser". Les deux autres toiles, "Mangeurs de pommes de terre" et les "Toumeles", restent introuvables. L'ensemble des toiles avait été estimé, à l'époque du vol, entre 100 et 125 millions de dollars.

## Le roi Hussein aux USA

### Une visite difficile

Le roi Hussein, arrivé lundi dernier à Washington, devait s'entretenir, hier, avec le président américain George Bush, qui a récemment apporté son soutien aux propositions israéliennes d'élections dans les territoires occupés. Les entretiens officiels doivent se poursuivre aujourd'hui entre le souverain hachémite et le secrétaire d'Etat américain James Baker.

Dernier grand rendez-vous de la diplomatie américaine avec les principaux dirigeants du Proche-Orient, la visite du roi de Jordanie à Washington devait permettre aux pays arabes modérés de relancer leur offensive en faveur d'une conférence internationale de paix. Une relance difficile, après le passage du premier ministre israélien, qui a vu les Etats-Unis soutenir ses propositions d'élections dans les territoires occupés, malgré le refus de l'OLP.

Le roi Hussein, conscient que

la Maison Blanche penche toujours du côté israélien, ne pouvait que rappeler au président américain l'opposition unanime de la population palestinienne de Cisjordanie et de Gaza à ce qu'elle considère comme une "tentative de mise sur la touche" de Yasser Arafat. Le souverain jordanien aura également fait valoir à George Bush qu'une réelle unité prévaut désormais entre les pays arabes modérés pour l'ouverture de négociations directes. Le dialogue, entamé entre Washington et l'OLP, aura vraisemblablement été évoqué par les deux chefs d'Etat.

François Mitterrand et le roi Hussein se sont entretenus à Paris lundi. Le tête-à-tête a surtout porté sur la guerre du Liban. Sauvant la mission humanitaire française entreprise dans ce pays, le souverain jordanien a notamment souligné la "grande responsabilité du monde arabe pour agir et mettre fin à cette folie" (D'après agences).

## Evacuation de blessés libanais

### La France poursuit sa mission

Soixante dix huit Libanais, blessés dans les combats qui continuent de faire rage à Beyrouth, ont été évacués hier vers Chypre par le navire-hôpital, "La Rance". Ils devaient être transportés dans la journée à bord d'un avion militaire, avant de gagner la France.

"La Rance" a accosté hier tôt dans la matinée dans le port de Larnaca, à Chypre, avec à son bord 78 blessés libanais chrétiens mais aussi musulmans. Le navire-hôpital français avait embarqué 14 blessés chrétiens dans le port de Jounieh, au nord de Beyrouth. Les autres, à majorité musulmane, venaient du port de Sidon, à 40 kilomètres au sud de la capitale libanaise. Tous ont rallié "La Rance" à bord de plusieurs embarcations dotées de canons et de mitrailleuses, opérant une rotation entre la côte et le bâtiment.

Ces victimes de la guerre entre les gouvernements chrétien et musulman pro-syrien, devaient ensuite rejoindre la France, à l'instar de douze autres blessés, arrivés à Paris dimanche soir. La première évacuation organisée depuis le cadre de la mission humanitaire française, baptisée "Acanthe", avait commencé dans la nuit de vendredi sous la menace des obus syriens. Entourée de la plus grande discrétion, l'opération était supervisée par le secrétaire d'Etat français à l'action humanitaire, Bernard Kouchner. Elle s'est poursuivie dimanche malgré de violents bombardements qui ont fait au moins 36

morts dans l'ambassadeur d'Espagne au Liban, ainsi que 181 blessés. Bombardements qui interviennent peu après les déclarations du chef du gouvernement à majorité musulmane, Salim Hoes, relevant notamment avec "surprise" que les chrétiens avaient été les premiers à bénéficier de soins. La tension est retombée, dès lundi, avec "l'accord total" intervenu entre Bernard Kouchner et Salim Hoes, au terme d'entretiens, qui selon les deux parties ont levé toute ambiguïté sur les intentions françaises.

Pour les Beyrouthins, la situation s'est encore aggravée, après l'arrêt de la centrale électrique de Zouk, au nord de la capitale. Faut-il de carburant, le courant a été coupé pour 80% des Libanais. Ces nouveaux déboires, alors que les combats se poursuivent, inquiètent de plus en plus la communauté internationale. Lundi, François Mitterrand s'est notamment entretenu au téléphone avec les présidents égyptien, américain et soviétique, ainsi qu'avec le chef du gouvernement espagnol.

Dans le même temps, deux personnalités françaises, MM. Cheysson et Pasqua ont demandé au gouvernement de saisir le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU. Le président du comité arabe de bons offices pour le Liban, Cheikh Sabah, a pour sa part annoncé mardi qu'une réunion extraordinaire, du conseil ministériel de la Ligue arabe se tiendrait demain à Tunis (D'après agences).

## Jordanie-FMI

### L'ère de l'austérité

Haussé des prix du carburant, du gaz, des cigarettes, du téléphone, du lait, de la margarine, mais aussi des taxes sur les voitures, l'électricité et les boissons... L'accord-programme conclu vendredi dernier entre le Fonds monétaire international (FMI) et le gouvernement jordanien se traduit depuis quelques jours par une série de mesures draconiennes d'austérité.

La Jordanie est entrée dimanche dans l'ère de la rigueur. Au terme de deux semaines de négociations entre le FMI et le gouvernement, Amman a décidé d'adopter un programme économique et financier pour les cinq prochaines années, afin d'obtenir le réajustement de sa dette extérieure estimée entre 6 et 7 milliards de dollars.

Dans la lettre d'intention qu'el-

le vient d'adresser au FMI, la Jordanie s'engage notamment à ramener son déficit budgétaire à 7% du produit national brut (1), avant la fin de 1993, et à renoncer progressivement à la planche à billets. Le royaume hachémite devra également combler le besoin de financement de sa balance des paiements, qui avoisine le milliard de dollars pour 1989.

Le FMI a d'ores et déjà exigé une économie immédiate de près de 110 millions de dollars, objectif qu'Amman estime pouvoir atteindre grâce aux augmentations de prix (2). Le gouvernement espère par ailleurs réduire l'inflation à 10% dès cette année, puis à 7% (3), par le planfonement de la croissance de la masse monétaire et par l'encadrement du crédit.

Enfin, pour éponger le besoin de la balance des paiements, la

Jordanie va encore diminuer ses importations. Son financement sera partiellement couvert par le crédit standby de 275 millions de dollars, octroyé par le FMI et par le réajustement de la dette civile et militaire via le Club de Paris.

Dans les milieux économiques jordanien, on estime que le cours du dinar restera stable pour le moment, après une dépréciation d'environ 45% en un an. Les spécialistes s'attendent toutefois à de futurs ajustements, destinés à compenser l'augmentation inévitable des coûts de production après la majoration des prix de l'énergie. (d'après agences)

(1) Il est actuellement de 16%.  
(2) Ces mesures devraient rapporter quelque 85 millions de dollars à l'Etat.  
(3) L'inflation a atteint 15% en 1988.

### Ont déjà augmenté:

Le carburant. L'essence ordinaire est passée de 180 fils par litre à 220 fils; le super, de 210 fils à 270 fils; le mazout et le kérozène, de 65 à 75 fils. Ces hausses, ainsi que celles des taxes sur les voitures (voir ci-contre) devraient entraîner une majoration des prix des taxis. Cette augmentation était discutée mardi par l'association professionnelle des compagnies de taxis au ministère des Transports.

Le gaz. La bouteille de 12 litres coûte désormais 2 dinars (+ 200 fils).

Le téléphone. Création d'une taxe de 10% sur le montant des factures. Augmentation de 10% l'équivalent de l'abonnement annuel et des frais de pose d'une ligne.

L'électricité. Création d'une taxe spéciale d'un dinar sur les factures et généralisation de la taxe annuelle de 12 dinars, destinée à la télévision.

Les cigarettes. Locales et étrangères augmentent respectivement de 26 et 27%.

Les boissons. La taxe à la consommation des alcools produits en Jordanie augmente de 40%. Celle des alcools importés de 50%. Ces hausses, qui touchent les producteurs et les distributeurs, se répercuteront sur les prix au détail. Les boissons gazeuses ont, elles, augmenté de 17%, passant de 110 fils le litre à 130 fils; l'eau minérale, de 110 à 135 fils; les jus de fruits, de 115 à 135 fils. Les laitages. Le litre de lait passe de 720 fils à un dinar (+ 40%); la boîte de deux kilos de margarine, de 1,03 à 1,25 dinar.

## Glissement de terrain près d'Ajloun

### Le risque demeure

Le glissement de terrain, sans précédent depuis la fin des années soixante, qui s'est produit du 4 au 6 avril dernier près d'Ajloun, continue d'inquiéter les spécialistes jordanien. Selon les géologues, le pan entier de montagne, saturé d'eau, qui s'est déplacé sur des pentes de quatre cent mètres, pourrait provoquer de "nouveaux affaissements de grande envergure".

"Il faut agir, et vite". Sans se vouloir alarmiste, Azzam Sabbah avoue qu'il reste néanmoins préoccupé par le glissement de terrain qui a affecté, au début du mois, Djebel Dahous à une trentaine de kilomètres au sud d'A-

joun. Selon le directeur du département de géologie du Service des ressources naturelles (NRA), de nouveaux mouvements de grande amplitude peuvent en effet se produire à tout moment.

"D'énormes quantités d'eau se sont accumulées au pied de la pente. Il faut les évacuer d'urgence et construire des murs de pierres pour retenir la terre", explique Azzam Sabbah. Les services de la Défense civile d'Irbid, dont dépend la zone sinistrée, indiquent mardi qu'aucune mesure de la sorte n'avait encore été prise mais que le site était sous surveillance permanente.

Le glissement de terrain, qui a

duré trois jours, n'a fait aucune victime. "Les habitants de la région savaient qu'il existait un risque et nous informaient sur les mouvements de plusieurs failles que nous avions repérées. Il y a six ans", précise Fahid Masri, ingénieur du NRA. Trois habitations, dont un hangar agricole ont été ensevelies par la lente avalanche de boue et de rochers, et vingt hectares d'oliviers, de bananiers et de cultures maraichères ont été détruits.

Selon les géologues jordanien, les canaux creusés à flanc de colline par les agriculteurs de Djebel Dahous ont contribué à l'origine du phénomène. (A.R.)

## Marché national saturé, débouchés insuffisants dans le monde arabe...

### Le vêtement jordanien file vers l'Ouest

Exporter vers l'Occident. Voilà la nouvelle ambition des principaux fabricants de vêtements en Jordanie. Depuis 1986, une dizaine d'entreprises, parmi les plus grandes du pays, en ont fait leur priorité. Au prix parfois d'un renouvellement total de leurs infrastructures. Marchés privilégiés: l'Amérique du Nord mais aussi l'Europe, que certaines d'entre elles ont décidé d'attaquer cette année.

Trop petit. Les plus grosses entreprises jordanien du vêtement font toutes le même constat: le marché national ne suffit plus à leur appétit de développement industriel. Pas plus que les débouchés offerts par le monde arabe. Les fabricants se tournent donc peu à peu vers les pays occidentaux pour écouler leur production.

"L'activité textile s'est considérablement développée ces dernières années en Jordanie, explique Hani Souf, chargé de ce secteur au ministère de l'Industrie. On a répertorié plus de quatre cents compagnies de confection dans l'ensemble du royaume en 1987/1988". La plupart d'entre elles ne dépassent guère la dimension d'un petit atelier, mais leur omniprésence, dans les quartiers citadins et les villages, leur permet de couvrir l'ensemble de la Jordanie.

A cette pléthore numérique, déjà synonyme de concurrence, s'est ajoutée, pour les grandes usines, l'offensive des importateurs d'Extrême-Orient en Jordanie et dans l'ensemble des pays arabes, ainsi que la perspective d'un rétrécissement de certains marchés régionaux. "Le protocole commercial avec l'Irak, qui facilitait les exportations de nos entreprises vers Bagdad, arrive à échéance à la fin du mois", souligne notamment Hani Souf. Encouragés par la chute récente du dinar, les leaders du vêtement jordanien ont changé leur machine à coudre d'épave.

Ainsi de la Jordan clothing company (JCC), numéro un de la



Amman Moda: Une usine de 4,000 mètres carrés, qui exporte 84% de sa production vers l'Amérique du Nord.

chemise une pour homme dans le royaume hachémite. Malgré sa position dominante, la société, dirigée depuis deux ans et demi par Jad Makda, a décidé de s'aventurer sur les marchés nord-américain et européen. Dès l'arrivée du nouveau et ambitieux Pdg, JCC a totalement renoué l'outillage de ses usines. "Nous avons acheté des machines à coudre plus performantes, changé nos appareils de découpe pour répondre aux exigences de ces pays", remarque Jad Makda.

### Changement radical

Fidèle à sa réputation d'indépendance, l'entreprise familiale a choisi la voie la plus risquée: "Nous voulons vendre nos propres produits", affirme le Pdg de JCC. Les normes, imposées par les importateurs occidentaux ont considérablement modifié les habitudes de travail de la société, la installée en Jordanie depuis 1949. "Pour être compétitifs, nous devons être capables de répondre très rapidement à des commandes éclair", poursuit-il. Ses deux usines, qui emploient aujourd'hui 150 salariés, ont ainsi augmenté leur capacité de production jusqu'à mille cinq cents unités par jour. "Il a également fallu renforcer nos stocks de tissus, misés sur de nouvelles couleurs..."

Et importer de plus en plus de

coton. "Ici, les gens préfèrent les chemises synthétiques, plus faciles à repasser. Aux Etats-Unis et en Europe, il nous est impossible de les vendre", ajoute M. Makda. Malgré les problèmes d'approvisionnement, et notamment le transit obligé des fournitures par le port d'Aqaba. "Le dédouanement et le transport nous font perdre un temps précieux et nous coûtent près de 6% du prix de revient", soutient-il. En dépit de ces difficultés, JCC estime que son avenir passe par l'ouest. Il est vrai que les chiffres sont encourageants: pour sa première incursion en Occident, l'entreprise a exporté l'an dernier 40% de sa production vers les Etats-Unis, le Canada, la Grande Bretagne et la Suède. "Il s'agit pour nous de tester ces nouveaux débouchés", souligne le Pdg de JCC. En 1989, nous espérons dépasser les 50%, en nous lançant dans la chemise fantaisie."

### "Des exécutants"

On est encore loin des 84% atteints en 1988 par Amman Moda (AM). Premier fabricant de vêtements féminins et pour enfants, avec une capacité de dix mille unités par jour, AM s'est résolument orienté vers la création en 1986 vers les marchés nord-Américains. "Nous avons

profité du passage en Jordanie d'un importateur qui travaillait avec l'Egypte, se souvient Mohammed Wasfi Abdallah, l'un des trois propriétaires de l'entreprise. Il a passé une première commande avec nous. C'est comme ça que nous avons commencé."

La suite se passe de commentaires: en trois ans, la part des exportations a augmenté de 35 à plus de 80% de la production. Dans le même temps, le nombre des salariés de l'usine, installée à Moukabelein, a presque triplé, passant de 200 à 560. Sa réussite, Amman Moda la doit avant tout aux accords passés avec les principales marques et chaînes de magasins américaines. "Nous travaillons avec une dizaine de sociétés, dont Calvin Klein, Bon Jour, Crasy Horse, CCG International ou encore Kim Heart, qui possède deux mille trois cents boutiques aux Etats-Unis", explique M. Wasfi.

Contrairement à la Jordan clothing company, AM a préféré adopter les modèles des importateurs. "Nous sommes des exécutants. Nos clients fournissent les patrons des vêtements, choisissent les couleurs...", poursuit son co-directeur. Les quelques stylistes de l'entreprise travaillent exclusivement pour le marché jordanien, sous les marques Ahlan et Amman Moda.

Comme ses concurrents, Mohammed Wasfi Abdallah envisage cette année de prendre pied en Europe. Prudemment. "Des contacts ont été pris avec des importateurs de petite et moyenne tailles en Espagne, et nous commencerons peut-être à exporter dans quelques mois", annonce-t-il.

AM refuse néanmoins la confection en franchise, telle que la pratique à Salt une autre société jordanienne, sous la marque Lee Cooper. Pour ses propriétaires, le meilleur moyen d'exporter reste la commande ponctuelle de clients étrangers. "Tant que les Etats-Unis et les autres pays occidentaux ne nous imposeront pas de quotas, comme c'est le cas avec Taiwan ou Hong Kong, nous continuerons à nous développer".

Mohammed Wasfi n'oublie pas la Jordanie pour autant. "Avec la réduction des importations et les diverses mesures visant à protéger le marché intérieur, la production locale va pouvoir reprendre, estime-t-il. Nos bénéficiaires s'en trouveront considérablement accrues, étant donné qu'il n'y a pas de concurrence locale. La Jordan clothing company, quant à elle, ne peut guère faire marche arrière. "Nos derniers modèles risquent de ne pas se vendre ici. C'est pourquoi notre principal objectif demeure la mise en place de réseaux de distribution dans les pays où nous importons, précise Jad Makda. Réduire le nombre des intermédiaires constitue leur seul moyen d'augmenter nos profits".

Le co-directeur de AM reconnaît cependant que les marchés étrangers constitueront toujours plus de 50% de ses débouchés. "Mais il y a une chance à saisir pour notre pays, soutient-il. Le secteur du textile représente l'avenir industriel du royaume, sur lequel pourrait s'appuyer un réel développement économique".

Alain Renon avec François Ducronx.

## 95 morts à Sheffield

### Football-massacre

Liverpool-Nottingham Forest: quatre vingt quinze morts et plus de deux cents blessés. L'horreur en guise de résultat. Samedi dernier au stade de Hillsborough à Sheffield, le football a une nouvelle fois rimé avec massacre, ravivant le souvenir du Heysel où 39 spectateurs du match Liverpool-Juventus de Turin avaient trouvé la mort. Cette fois pourtant, l'horreur n'est pas due aux bagarres; qu'affectionne une certaine catégorie de supporters, mais à la folie collective d'au moins deux mille fans frustrés de ne pouvoir assister à la demi-finale de la coupe d'Angleterre entre deux équipes vedettes. Devant la pression de la foule, la police a cédé et ouvert l'une des grilles du stade. La suite a été atroce. Dans les gradins archi-combles, des centaines de personnes, dont de nombreux adolescents, ont été écrasées, étouffées et piétinées contre les grilles du terrain. Mardi, 170 blessés étaient encore hospitalisés, dont 19 dans des unités de soins intensifs. Le gouvernement britannique a ouvert une enquête et décidé de verser un demi-million de livres aux familles des victimes.

## FIGURE

### La mort de Charles Vanel

### Un monstre du cinéma

1912-1988. Entre ces deux dates s'étend la carrière phénoménale de Charles Vanel, décédé samedi dernier en France, à l'âge de 96 ans. De "Jim Crow", tourné dans les années dix sous la direction de Robert Péguy, aux "Saisons du plaisir", réalisé l'an dernier par Jean-Pierre Mocky, Charles Vanel aura joué du muet au cinémascope dans quelques trois cents films. Avec les meilleurs metteurs en scène: Feyder, Clouzot, Carné, Bunuel ou encore Hitchcock.

Breton au visage buriné, flanqué de sa pipe légendaire, il évoquait toujours sa longue aventure au service du septième art avec modestie: "Etre acteur, dis-ait-il, c'est être artisan". Policier ou gangster, jeune premier ou vieillard, ouvrier ou grand bourgeois, il a incarné les rôles les plus différents avec autant de bonheur.

Après une brève éclipse au lendemain de la guerre, il était devenu l'un des acteurs incontournables du cinéma français. Grâce, notamment, à trois longs métrages d'Henri-Georges Clouzot: "Le Salaire de la peur" (1953), avec Yves Montand, qui lui valut le prix d'interprétation masculine au festival de Cannes; "Les Diaboliques" (1954) et "La



Vérité" (1961), avec Brigitte Bardot.

Alfred Hitchcock l'avait lancé à la poursuite de Cary Grant dans "La Main au collet" (1954), avant que Luis Bunuel ne l'engage pour "La Mort en ce jardin" (1956). Il s'imposa encore dans "L'Ainé des Ferchaux" de Melville (1962), "La plus belle Soirée de ma vie" d'Ettore Scola (1972) et "Cadavres exquis" de Francesco Rosi (1975).

Fait commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur en 1985, Charles Vanel avait un souhait: "terminer sur un bon rôle, dans un bon film".

## SORTIR

### Amphithéâtre du folklore



Amman, Foubes, Salt, Ramtha... Le folklore des villes jordanien s'est emparé depuis hier de l'amphithéâtre romain de la Ville Basse. Jusqu'au trois mai, onze groupes régionaux, dont l'ensemble de cuivre de l'armée nationale, vont se succéder chaque dimanche et mercredi soirs sur la scène du théâtre antique. Au programme: les chants et danses traditionnels du royaume hachémite. Selon le ministère jordanien de la Culture, ce festival s'inscrit dans le cadre d'une campagne de promotion des différents aspects de l'héritage artistique du pays. Il intervient après une série de manifestations consacrées au théâtre et à la poésie arabes par le Centre culturel royal d'Amman. D'autres concerts seront organisés dans le courant de l'année, pour permettre au plus grand nombre possible de groupes artistiques de se produire devant un public. Concerts tous les mercredis et dimanches soirs, après l'iftar, jusqu'au 3 mai. Entrée libre.

## A L'AFFICHE

### CINEMA

#### Rosi et la grande ville

Film allemand pour les enfants (1980). Rosi, 12 ans, quitte la Bavière et s'installe à Berlin avec sa famille. Ce voyage bouleverse sa vie.

Institut Goethe, samedi 22 avril à 16h00 (en allemand).

#### In the heat of the night

De Norman Jewison, avec Sidney Poitier, Rod Steiger et Warren Oates (1967). Un riche industriel d'une petite ville du Mississippi est assassiné. La population soupçonne d'abord un noir, puis découvre qu'il est policier, lui demande d'élucider le crime.

Centre américain, dimanche 23 avril à 16h00 (en anglais).

#### Une si jolie petite plage

D'Yves Allégret, avec Gérard Philippe (1949). Un orphelin retourne à l'école où il fut employé et souvent maltraité par la patronne.

CCF, samedi 24 avril à 20h30 (en français, sous-titré en arabe).

#### Gribouille

De Marc Allégret, avec Raimu et Michèle Morgan (1937). Un brave homme prend en affection une jeune femme accusée d'un meurtre.

CCF, mercredi 26 avril à 20h30 (en français, sous-titré en arabe).

#### Ciné-club

En raison du Ramadan, le ciné-

### EXPOSITION

#### Peinture à la main

Jean-François Noble, artiste français, expose ses toiles peintes à la main et anime un atelier en plein air pour les enfants de 6 à 11 ans.

Jardins du Mayo Arts Centre, tous les jours jusqu'au 27 avril inclus, de 20h30 à 23h00.

### TELEVISION

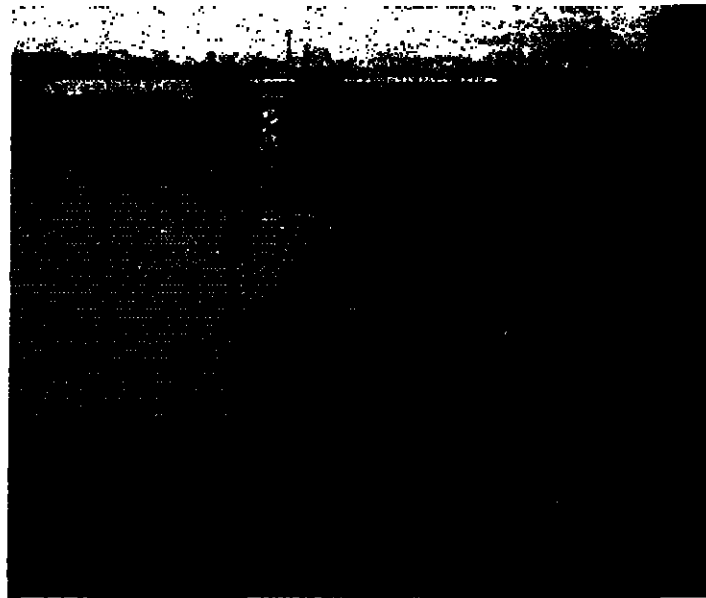
"Colargol", dessin animé pour les enfants (JTV, vendredi 21 avril à 17h15). "Le retour à Malakvel", avec Frédéric Pierrot et Jean-François, dans le cadre de la série "Haute tension", proposée par Pierre Grimblat.

Un jeune homme, injustement accusé de meurtre, revient au village après avoir purgé une longue peine de prison. Il décide de découvrir le vrai coupable et se heurte au mépris des habitants... UTV, vendredi 21 avril à 17h30.





Many of Sengki's residents are squatters.



Sengki was built on the banks of the Chao Phaya River



Manangkasi's new commercial section.

## Clearing slums in Thailand

By Lois Jensen

A VISIT to Sengki is a respite from the frenetic pace of Bangkok. Life slows down here. Sengki is a community of 200 families, built around a muddy road that leads to the river. It is filled with sounds of barking dogs, crying babies and TV melodramas drifting out from airy, makeshift wood homes. Despite its squalid appearance, it conveys a sense of "neighbourhood," a quality fast disappearing from many of the world's largest cities.

Like thousands of other slum dwellers in Thailand's capital city, the people Sengki faced eviction as downtown Bangkok began to encroach and real estate developers sought the land they lived on. But so far they have escaped the bulldozer, thanks to an unusual experiment in inner city land-use that the Thais call "land-sharing." The plan respects the interests of residents on the margins of Bangkok society, while permitting the city's inevitable modernisation.

The pressure to move began to mount almost as soon as the smoke had cleared from a fire that swept the neighbourhood a decade ago.

Se-nag Suansrakaw, now 77, remembers clearly the day in 1978 when he returned to Sengki

to find nothing left of his wooden, two-storey home. Gone too were the money and gold pieces that he had saved over the years.

The 1978 fire destroyed almost everything the residents of Sengki owned. And because their homes no longer existed, their leases on house sites were cancelled by the landowner. When they rebuilt, they were considered squatters.

Sengki is hardly unique of Bangkok's more than 1,000 slum communities, over 200 were threatened with eviction last year alone. Conventional strategies for dealing with the problem, such as rehousing residents in alternative locations, were abandoned by the government as too costly. Nor is relocation acceptable to most slum dwellers. Some upgrading of low-income areas, such as providing waste collection and clean water, has been initiated by the government. But for years, the larger issue of land tenure remained unresolved, leaving many city dwellers without long-term security.

Land-sharing is an arrangement that divides a slum into two parts. "One is for the landowner to develop to the best possible commercial advantage. The other is leased or sold to residents, who organise themselves into a cooperative to build new homes. For residents it means smaller, but secure, plots of land. For the

landowner it means immediate financial gain rather than prolonged, often costly, confrontations with tenants.

"The concept is simple," says Somsook Boonyabancha, an official with the National Housing Authority assigned to the Sengki project. "We have a conflict, and to resolve it we share, instead of saying 'We win, you lose.' It is appropriate in a compromising society like Thailand."

In Sengki, land-sharing has not come easily. Conditions deteriorated rapidly after the fire. Although many residents lost their leases, they stayed on and built temporary homes, along with a large number of new squatters. Land-sharing was first proposed in 1980 after the landowner — the King's Property Bureau — refused to renew anyone's leases. The National Housing Authority stepped in to play an intermediary role.

Funding came from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which channelled \$69,000 to the Sengki project through the U.N. Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). Both organisations saw land-sharing as a model for future slum clearing.

A commercial loan was obtained by the Sengki Housing Cooperative for a down payment on part of the land, which in turn

was sold to residents at less than half of its market value. In exchange, the residents agreed that the King's Property Bureau should sell or develop the remaining land for commercial use.

Plots have now been set aside for 132 homes. Various models have been proposed to residents. But owners can choose to build whatever structure they like — and in their own time. Many continue to live in temporary shelters, choosing to build only after paying off their loans for the land.

While the concept of land-sharing may appear simple, the reality is something else. "When a community is fighting a landlord," Boonyabancha says, "there is a feeling of solidarity because the authority is outside the group. But once residents are in charge of dividing the land among themselves there are problems. The enemies are now inside the community itself."

Suansrakaw is one of many old-timers who has had trouble accepting the land-sharing agreement. Having occupied a plot for decades, he refuses to believe that anyone could force him out. Moreover, he feels that his new plot is too small for him and his wife and the two other families that live with them. He is upset that squatters, who moved into

the area after the 1978 fire, should also be allowed to settle in Sengki. But he has decided he will go along with the rest of the group.

Sceptics such as Suansrakaw began to change their minds when they visited Manangkasi, one of five other land-sharing projects in Bangkok which are in various stages of completion. In Manangkasi, the community worked without intermediaries in negotiating an agreement with the landlord. Attractive, two-storey row houses along one boundary of the property attest to the project's success. Just yards away, in an area that is still in dispute, are housing conditions that are usually associated with city slums.

One of the driving forces in Manangkasi's decision to resist eviction is Tang Ka-Sheung, an animated Chinese woman who has lived in the neighbourhood all her life. She even camped out overnight in front of the Prime Minister's home to bring the residents' plight to the government's attention. She now works as the loan officer for the community's credit union.

"It's tough work," she explains. Each day she makes the neighbourhood rounds. If a family owes 100 baht (\$3.92) and doesn't have it, she will ask for 50 baht or less. She tries to be

flexible, but encourages them to pay something.

"In a sense, land-sharing is 'formalising' an informal situation," explains Boonyabancha. "And this can be troubling in cases where communities have always operated on a very informal basis. What we try to do is to encourage peoples' involvement through an election process — and then turn over as much of the administration as possible to the community itself."

"You spend a lot of time in the beginning helping organise residents — say two years — but from then on the community will operate by itself. We want to prove that land-sharing is possible — but it takes time."

In many cases, it also takes outside help. In Sengki, it was a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) called the Community Relations Group that helped forge a consensus on how to proceed in the project's early stages. "In eviction cases, the community cannot attack the landowner outright because they'll lose," says Boonyabancha. "NGOs are particularly important because they can work in close contact with the government or real estate developers. But they try and keep the power structures separate from each other — and find space in between."

## Teaching the computer to read Chinese

COMPUTER expert Peter Cassiers says he was amazed when his computer was able to distinguish between an "l" and a "1".

"Can you?" he asks, promptly answering: "Only in context."

His fellow-research scientists at the department of metrology and automatic control technology at the Technical University in Berlin nod in agreement.

That isn't the only party trick their computer can perform. It is the only one in Europe that can read Chinese characters — 3,755 of them.

Since 1986 he and his colleagues, computer specialists and Sinologists, have set themselves an ambitious target: to "teach" their computer to read Chinese characters semi-automatically.

It does so by means of an electronic scanner. Similar devices exist in Japan. Research projects are under way at Chinese universities. But the Berlin computer is the most accurate yet developed.

"In Taiwan and China," says Sinologist Richard Suchenwirth, "over 500 processes have been devised in the past 10 years by which to computerise Chinese characters."

Keying them into a computer is only part of the problem; reading them — and understanding the combination of pictograms and syllabic characters — is much more problematic.

Depending on the dictionary used, Chinese script consists of a nucleus of between 40,000 and 60,000 characters.

It is no small consolation, as Suchenwirth puts it, that the 3,755 characters the Berlin computer has been taught to read make up roughly 98 per cent of the characters actually used.

Each character incorporates a graphic factor derived, over the millennia, from pictorial representation.

All characters that have anything to do with medicine, for instance, are topped with a stylised bunch of medicinal herbs.

"But we had to teach the computer an entirely different reading method," Suchenwirth says. Each printed character is first

read in four directions and classified by the quantity and frequency of black, or printer's ink, encountered.

Once the computer has registered these data the character as scanned on paper by what amounts to a video camera can then be reproduced on the monitor screen.

"Our original objective," says project director Irmfried Hartmann, "was to achieve 95-per cent reading accuracy. We have now reached 98 per cent."

To reach this degree of accuracy the scanner and the computer to which it is attached had to memorise Chinese characters — just like students do.

When the project began, the Berlin research scientists keyed about 6,000 Chinese characters into the computer, which is one day intended to make life easier for librarians.

Programmes that combine text input and scanner systems, i.e. both reading and writing, might sell like hot cakes in the Far East. But the Berlin project is nowhere near that stage yet.

"We still need an entire day to read a single page of a Chinese magazine," Hartmann says. By the year after next, when the DM120,000 project is scheduled for completion, the printer should be able to print out a page a minute.

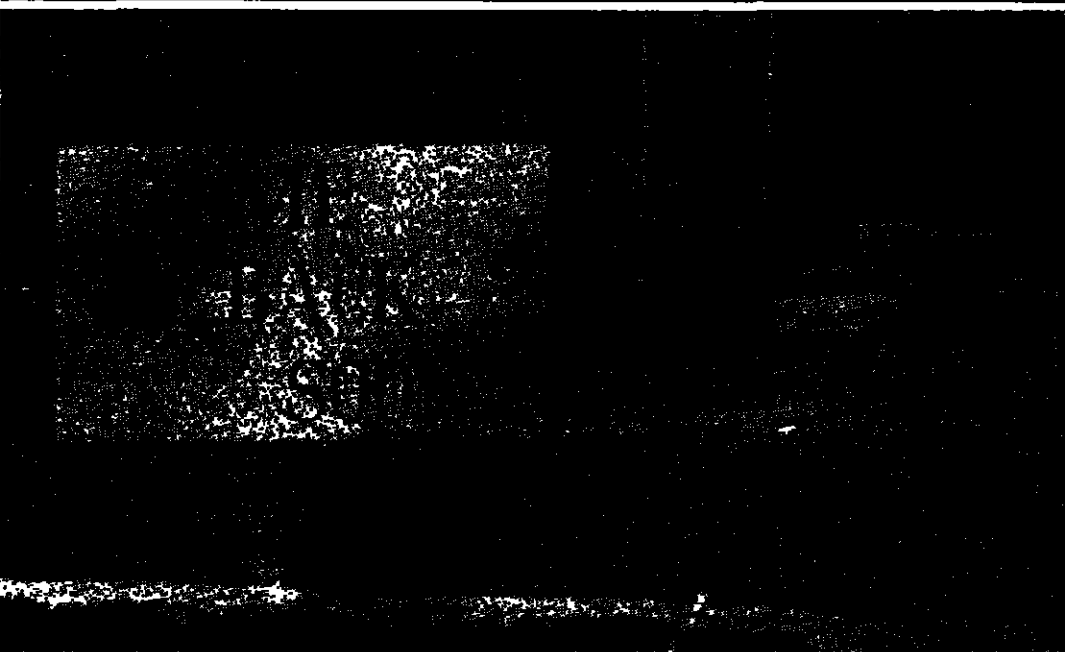
But the scanner still has much to learn before this speed can be achieved.

The project was presented in Moscow last October after a procedure had been devised, at the double, by which the computer can read the Roman and the Cyrillic alphabets.

They are shortly to be joined by Japanese characters. The Berlin project staff feel Korean characters are feasible too.

"But it will be a long time before computers can accurately translate Chinese," Suchenwirth says. He should know.

Each Chinese character can have as many as several dozen meanings. The computer has yet to be taught to memorise more than three — Frankfurter Rundschau.



## How to run a country house and keep out the theme parks

By Paul Majendie  
Reporter

BANTRY BAY, Ireland — Bantry House was the first Irish stately home opened to the public. Today's owner battles to keep afloat without resorting to garish theme parks.

Egerton Shelswell-White, whose family have lived in the elegant house for 250 years, waves a massive new annual insurance bill in the air and confesses: "a lot of the time I do get terribly depressed."

"But I think of all the family that lived here before and think it would be a crying shame to give it up. At least we have something to complain about," he said.

The trick is trying to balance the books without having tigers roaming around a wildlife park in the garden or cable cars whizzing up the hillside to the spectacular view over one of the loveliest bays along Ireland's southwest

coast.

Fairgrounds and hamburger stands are definitely not for the man whose mother first opened Bantry House's doors to the public in 1945.

"Without wishing to decry other people's efforts, I would never want to go into zoos or that kind of gimmick. It would spoil the atmosphere."

"In this job you have to be part showman, part businessman and part lord of the manor," said the affable owner who attracts 35,000 visitors a year to his house but still needs more funds for upkeep.

So he went into the bed-and-breakfast business, joining 27 other stately home owners across Ireland who offer visitors the chance to sample the ambience of being a private guest in a palatial mansion.

Shelswell-White and his 27 colleagues clubbed together to form "The Hidden Ireland" as

the perfect magnet for wealthy tourists, especially from the United States, who are keen to enjoy a glimpse of how the other half lives. Bed and breakfast costs \$35 a head per night.

At the other end of Ireland, Lord Henry Mountcharles goes in for pop concerts, attracting stars like Bruce Springsteen and David Bowie to perform to thousands in the grounds of his Slane Castle.

Egerton Shelswell-White, a passionate musician who plays the trombone in a classical orchestra, two brass bands and a dance band, opts for a somewhat different path. His home is the intimate venue for a series of classical concerts.

But that is not a major moneyspinner. "I want to go more into the weddings, banquets and function business. I have got 500 people coming here from the (French car company) Citroen. That is very profitable."

His family's past too will soon



become a saleable commodity as the stables in the grounds of Bantry House are being converted into a museum to commemorate the bicentenary of the French invasion of Ireland in 1798.

The invasion, led by Irish patriot Wolfe Tone and French General Hoche against Britain, boasted a fleet of 43 ships and 16,000 men.

But the fleet was scattered by bad weather, only a few remnants made it to Bantry Bay and local landowner Richard White alerted

the British army, placed his home at the disposal of British troops and raised the "Bantry Cavalry."

For that loyalty to the British colonial masters of Ireland, he was created Baron Bantry and later promoted to earl. His son then went on a grand tour of Europe, sending back trunks of antiques that filled Bantry House.

The house was built at the beginning of the 18th century and purchased in 1750 by the White family.

On return from his grand tour

of Europe, Richard White's son created a formal Italian garden with terraced steps looking down over the elegant mansion.

The house has stayed in the White family ever since and a portrait of Egerton Shelswell-White playing the trombone is the first family picture to greet you in the grand hall's entrance.

"I am very fortunate as my Austrian wife is a picture restorer. She is very good at that and is also a very good cook and does a lot of our catering," Shelswell-White said.



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**BLIND DATE**

Performances: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.



# Oman: The Leap from Medieval to Modern

By William N. Ralford

AS recently as 1970, when 30-year-old Sultan Qaboos bin Said assumed power, Oman was one of the most isolated, underdeveloped countries in the world. Three schools served fewer than one thousand students in a country of nearly one million people. Oman had no press, no radio, no phone system and only 10 kilometres of paved road.

But the country has since been transformed. In cities and towns, beige and white stucco homes and modern offices with brightly coloured doors provide up-to-date amenities. Many Omanis now enjoy radio, television and direct-dial telephones. More than 4,000 kilometres of asphalt highway link an area almost as large as Great Britain. Oman's crude oil is processed in local refineries. Over 2,300 industries have sprouted in and around Muscat, the capital on the Arabian Sea. And nowadays, Omanis have access to 44 hospitals, 76 clinics and over 700 schools.

Despite its modern facade, Oman is still a developing country in which technical assistance can — and is — making a difference in helping to bring the country's most remote regions into the twentieth century. Moreover, Oman's revenues from crude oil are hardly infinite. The country's wells could run dry within 20 years. That puts a premium on using every available resource to develop the country now against the time when earnings from oil are no longer available.

The government is currently pursuing a policy of "Omanisation," replacing expatriates with trained citizens. An estimated 300,000 people — 30 per cent of the country's workforce — are foreigners. The country's future will depend largely on bringing the next generation of Omanis into the managerial and technical positions that form the backbone of any modern economy.

The challenge is formidable. Most professionals, technicians and bankers come from abroad. Tailors are mostly Indian. Over 80 per cent of the teachers and medical personnel and many of the agricultural extension workers are from overseas — a large percentage from Egypt, the Sudan and Jordan.

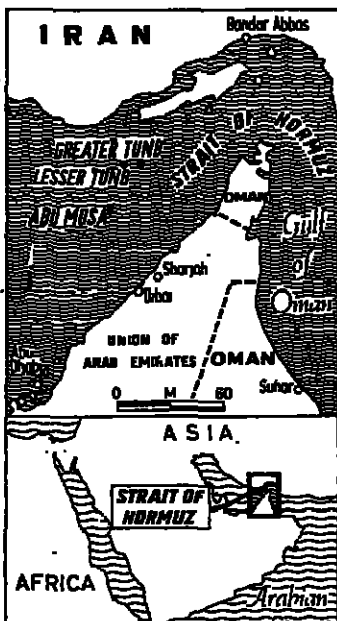
"Omanisation" also means reaching the people of the villages who form well over half the population. They are hardly touched by the fruits of industrial society. Electricity is coming. But plumbing is rare. Illiteracy remains widespread. Here, the task of enabling people to take charge of their own future is even more daunting than in urban areas. Responsibility for reaching the villagers lies with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MOSAL). "Until recently," says Mohsen Juma, head of MOSAL's Directorate-General for Community Development, "government for the village meant the local sheik (village chief)." Now, the Directorate's field workers go into villages and encourage formation of committees which discuss local problems and possible solutions. They also help guide the villagers in the planning and execution of their own projects.

Because a large portion of the programme is directed towards women, the head of Community Development works closely with his counterpart in charge of Women and Child Affairs. Women make up over 60 per cent of the population of most villages, mainly because an estimated 20,000 men work in Gulf state oil fields to the north while others commute to nearby towns.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has long supported MOSAL's community development programmes. UNDP provides advice on the formation of projects, assists in the selection of technical experts and helps provide UN Volunteers (UNVs). Funding comes entirely from the government. The 10 UNVs in Oman — soon to be 20 — include a psychologist, sociologist, a specialist in physical rehabilitation, a statistician and an agronomist. All are deeply involved in training Omanis, many of whom are women in a society traditionally dominated by men.

Most village women seek basic services for themselves and their children. The programmes offered suggest the leap that Oman must make to develop an adequate pool of skilled managers and technicians. "We teach literacy, hygiene, nutrition and how to rear a child," says Juma, "subjects that were kept away from the villagers for many years." Juma speaks from experience, as he himself had to leave the country before 1970 in order to get advanced education.

Community development programmes are now underway in 21 villages which line the wadis near Rostaq, three hours drive west of Muscat. The wadis are riverbeds, dry most of the year. Towering above them are mountains of volcanic rock which jut into the bright blue sky. In many places, the wadis are lined with date palms which provide one of the



country's quality exports, and are descended from 30,000 seedlings planted in the 17th century by Imam Saif bin-Sultan in order to improve the life of his people. Under the palms wends the falaj, a canal system developed 2,000 years ago that is still the main method for distributing water to most villages.

In 1980, when the villagers were first approached, there were no community centers on roads. Now there are both. But the first priority was to teach basic literacy, which had an immediate spin-off. After learning to read, villagers could understand the writing on community health posters. As already proven in other developing countries, infant mortality rates dropped as soon as female literacy took hold.

New schools are usually followed by new clinics. Tawi Atair is a willaya — administrative region — of 66 villages lying in the monsoon-soaked Dhofar mountains on Oman's southern coast. A clinic is now bringing modern medicine to its 6,332 people who once relied on local potions for healing.

Dr. Mustafa Shendy, a smiling Egyptian, is in charge of the six-bed clinic in the town of Tawi Atair. Preventive medicine is his priority. He is training twenty students from the local high school to be paramedics. Eight are women. Dr. Shendy's goal is to use these students to help him train others in outlying villages in basic health care.

Women are encouraged to come to the clinic for childbirth and to bring their children for treatment. Tafood Aly Suhail and her four-year-old son Ahmed were there in early October. She had travelled 12 miles in a truck to have Ahmed treated for persistent diarrhoea. Her first child was born at home but the second was delivered in the clinic. She no longer hesitates to come for help if necessary. "We get medicine, a doctor's care, everything," she says. "Now my friends bring their children."

Agricultural improvement is another of Oman's development goals. In Wadi Beni Ghafir, near Rostaq, demonstration plots nestled along the falaj are planted with new varieties of tomatoes, onions and peppers. Farmers are also given plots for their own experiments. Seeds and fertilizer are provided by the government. Women are trained in processing vegetables and fruits.

According to Fatma Ahmad Hilal, an Egyptian teacher working in the programme, women want a means to earn money. "Making cakes, embroidering scarves and producing honey are among the skills that we teach," says Ms. Hilal. Embroidering the traditional Omani skullcap for males marks a sharp break with tradition. Males traditionally wore the skullcap but as many men now work in the oilfields or in towns, the skill has been transferred to women. "The men," says Ms. Hilal, "encouraged the change."

In fact, Omani men routinely support their wives' participation in self-improvement projects. They like the extra income available to the family. Many believe that educated wives make better mothers.

A case in point is Aza Al-Miskry, a mother of seven who has attended literacy classes for seven years. She began assisting in the embroidery class whenever the instructor was away. She later attended a special course given at one of the eleven voluntary women's associations formed in recent years. Now, she is the programme's embroidery instructor. "My husband encouraged me," she says. "When needed, he drives students to and from classes here."

Perched on top of a hill in the village of Aim Aq is a weaving centre. Butressed against an old military watchtower, it consists of a few poles covered by a thin black cloth. It houses two large looms and a dozen workers. Ghania Saeed and Mariam Massoud, mothers in their early 20s, are working at one of the looms. The 1 x 2 metre rug that they are weaving portrays the houses, trees, birds and falaj found in the village.

The rug has already been sold for 90 rials (\$210) to a buyer in

Muscat. Any weaving and embroidery work not sold directly to customers is quickly snapped up by a government outlet in Muscat. "We can't keep the store supplied," says Mozal Seifi, an instructor who was born in nearby Rostaq.

Similar training programmes have been instituted in more than half of the villages in Oman. As resources and time permit they are being extended to the most remote areas and nomadic tribes. As part of this expansion, Muhammad Ahmad Awatef, a United Nations Volunteer working with the Directorate-General for Women and Child Affairs, is conducting a 110-question survey. "It covers the status of women from A to Z," says Mrs. Awatef, an Egyptian sociologist. "The goal is to scientifically draw a picture of how women view themselves and how they are viewed by men in order to enable the government to provide the necessary services."

The village-level survey is typical of the Omani approach to development. The government believes it is necessary for the people involved to be consulted before programmes are drawn up. Another basic aim of government assistance is village participation. Local residents pay half the value of projects in the form of money, labour or materials. Even in pre-school programmes, students must pay three rials (\$7) a month to attend classes.

Much remains to be done. Only 40 per cent of the eligible pre-schoolers attend classes. "The main reason," says Amour bin Al Mazmuri, Acting Chief of Community Services in Sharqiya willayat "is that their families often can't afford to pay three rials per month for each of their children. We shouldn't economise on these basic needs."

Omani women appear to have access to most opportunities open to men. "Women are treated equally under the law," says Huda Abdullah Al Ghazali, head of the Directorate-General for Women and Child Affairs and formerly the Army's chief of personnel. Women are active in business as well as government. And 43 per cent of all students are women. In fact, women are a majority in the first class in the new medical school at Sultan Qaboos University.

However, some Omanis feel

uncomfortable about co-education. Only 25 per cent of the nation's schools are coed. The remainder are all-male or all-female. The second and third classes of medical students at the University have fewer women than men. This is apparently not due to a lack of qualified women, but to a reluctance of some graduates of girls' schools to study alongside men. "The government strongly urges women to participate in medicine," says Dr. Rustom Burjorjee, Director of the University's Department of Behavioral Sciences. "Any resistance is on the part of prospective students, not the government."

The way seems to be open for "Omanisation" for all — men and women alike in a country where oil and enlightened government has brought much promise. There are jobs to be filled, a culture that prizes fairness, a government that is committed to development where it is most needed. Sultan Qaboos repeatedly emphasises that the government must not just talk about "Omanisation," it must vigorously pursue its implementation. As the villagers in the willayats of Tawi Atair and Sharqiya can attest, the Sultan's message is getting through.



Community Development Director Hamed Mohammed Al Dwayni shows off new peppers



Classes in adult literacy and child care.

Hani Ali in action

## Focus on People

# Here comes the summer

By Mariam M. Shahin

This week Jordan's tennis ace Hani Ali talks to Focus on People about the importance of sports in the future of Jordan's youth.

Born in Kuwait in 1964, Hani Ali began playing tennis at the tender age of 11. "There were lots of clubs that provided facilities to those that wanted to play tennis or swim at a relatively low cost."

Most schools, both public and private, provided tennis courts and lessons to their students. "Actually public schools had the best sports facilities in Kuwait, that's why my last three years of schooling were spent in public schools," recalls Ali.

Ali's life changed when he moved with his family to Jordan in 1980. "I had the shock of my life, when we moved to Jordan. I was still at school, but the schools in Jordan did not provide the same facilities as those in Kuwait."

Ali found it was difficult to find courts, equipment coaches and people to play with. In 1981, he was among a delegation sent by His Majesty King Hussein of 6 tennis players to represent Jordan to a tennis training camp in the U.S. Although Ali's parents had previously sent him to tennis training camps in the U.S. it was on this particular trip that Ali made the contacts with the U.S. tennis establishments that were to prove crucial to his future. He received scholarships on the basis of his performance, first to Menlo College in California and eventually finished his B.A. degree at the University of Florida in economics. While attending university, Ali was being trained and promoted by an ex-tennis pro who took on the role of mentor. Ali spent three months every summer playing tennis in Europe and after graduating spent one year touring the world while participating in international and national tournaments.

After taking what he calls "a very difficult but necessary" decision to return to Jordan, Ali discovered various things. "People in Jordan have not been educated to respect sports as an activity that is on an equal par with other forms of study. Those that study sports at university are often considered to be those that have been rejected from the academic programmes. The tremendous prestige that comes with being an athlete in the U.S. therefore, is practically non-existent in Jordan."

According to Ali, each sport carries along with it a different type of personality that personifies that sport. More than just being physically fit Ali believes that sports are essential in the building of a well rounded, balanced character. "I respect the American education system a lot because they attempt to form well rounded people not people who are slaves to a machine or a certain profession."

Although Ali wants to begin his career as soon as possible using his economics degree, he has made a feasibility study on the possibility of opening a tennis school. There are barely two dozen tennis courts available to those who want to play tennis and these exist for the most part in private clubs. "I would like to make the sport available for almost anyone who wants to play," Ali, however, faces various obstacles. Those sponsors that he has found in Jordan are slowly backing away because of the ever continuing belt-tightening economic situation. For those that want to play, the cost of the sport is high. Ali explains that a can of three tennis balls currently costs JD 4.5 and for an active player such a purchase would have to be made every other week "at least." Tennis rackets, shoes and other clothing are very costly as well. Judging from the figures, for those living in Jordan tennis is an elitist sport. Although the task is a difficult one, Ali aims at making it available to a much wider range of people than it currently is. "Once you start you will never want to stop, it is a beautiful, addictive game. Originally having thought of a deluxe school, Ali believes that even a basic school would cost about JD 300,000 to build. "That is a conservative estimate and as far as the location is concerned it would have to be outside of Amman. Otherwise the cost would easily reach double that amount."

In the last two or three years an increased awareness of physical fitness has allowed the growth of physical fitness centre that deal mostly with sports such as aerobics, muscle toning and body building.

"The trend of being physically fit has picked up in Jordan, which is good. Now those responsible for educating children have to do the same. It's not a matter of teaching children how to play a certain game, it's a matter of educating children about sports. Once educationalists become fully aware that physical and mental fitness are combined then we will have taken the most essential step. In the U.S. they used to train our minds for a game with specialist computer games in order to strengthen our strategies and our concentration. How one performs in a game depends on ones psychological fitness."

Currently the Little League of the Tennis Federation is training over one hundred youngsters between the ages of nine and 14, with sessions twice a week and matches on Friday. The programme was inaugurated two months ago by Her Majesty Queen Noor. The waiting list is pretty long.

Considering that almost 60 per cent of Jordan's population is under the age of 18 and the fact that these kids have to have a let out for their energy somewhere, (since our society is socially conservative for the most part), it is only reasonable that sports activities to which they could channel their energies should be promoted and created on an ever increasing scale. Looking out of the window at the sun, Ali adds "and after all if you want to look good for the summer, tennis helps."

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## Oil prices soar after N. Sea blast

**LONDON (R) —** World crude oil prices surged on Wednesday after a blast on a North Sea platform shut off a quarter of British supply.

None of the 227 workers on board the platform was hurt in the explosion which followed a gas leak on platform Cormorant Alpha, some 100 nautical miles from land.

But the Tuesday night incident sent crude oil in Europe \$1 higher to \$20 a barrel, the highest in 20 months, extending a rally that had already moved petrol prices up in many nations.

Nearly half a million barrels of crude a day are normally pumped on a subsea pipeline running through a damaged leg of Cormorant Alpha from several fields including part of the giant Brent reservoir.

Operators Shell Expro said

pumping had now been stopped and, until the damage had been inspected, "it is impossible to give any indication of the length of time of the current shutdown."

A spokesman said there was "plenty in store" in the tanks at the Sullom Voe terminal in Scotland's Shetland Isles to which the oil is pumped for loading aboard tankers.

But the spot market was jittery. Prices were already riding high after March's Alaskan oil spill at Valdez and because of a tight U.S. petrol market. OPEC supply cuts and several earlier North Sea accidents which shut in big volumes of British oil.

After news of the latest inci-

dent, a cargo of Brent blend crude changed hands at \$20 a barrel for June loading, up more than \$1 from Tuesday night and the highest since Aug. 5, 1987, London traders reported.

In last autumn's glut, before the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) throttled excess supply, the price dipped almost to \$11.

Petrol-rich Brent is the most widely-traded crude internationally and a world benchmark. In Asian trading, sourer Middle East Dubai crude was offered at \$18, up 75 cents.

News on Tuesday from the American Petroleum Institute that U.S. crude stocks dropped by 5.72 million barrels in the second week of April also buoyed world prices.

Cormorant Alpha produces

only a modest 40,000 barrels of oil a day. But Tuesday's blast forced closure of a pumping system that had taken more than 470,000 barrels daily to the Sullom Voe terminal, 100 miles away in the Shetland Isles.

Total British oil output had been running at about 1.8 million barrels a day before the blast, already sharply below the 2.5 million of a year ago because of previous accidents.

Among these was the world's worst offshore oil disaster last July 6 when explosions in a gas compressor on North Sea platform Piper Alpha killed 167 men. A floating storage vessel broke loose in a storm in December forcing more platforms to close.

Shell Expro is a unit of Shell U.K. Ltd, part of the Royal Dutch/Shell oil group.

## India puts three big ports under state of emergency

**NEW DELHI (R) —** Authorities declared a state of emergency at India's three biggest ports Wednesday in a bid to crush a dock workers' strike which has reduced trade to a trickle.

The strike by some 300,000 dock workers for higher wages has virtually paralysed India's 10 major ports at a time when the government is laying special emphasis on exports.

Businessmen fear foreign vessels may dump cargoes destined for India at ports in other countries because of the strike.

About 50 India-bound vessels have already diverted to Karachi in Pakistan to unload containers as a result of the strike, a spokes-

man for Karachi Port Trust said. A spokesman for the surface transport ministry in New Delhi said a state of emergency had been declared at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras to enable port authorities to hire unregistered workers to handle cargo.

He said other ports had been authorised to take similar measures but so far only shipping line staff have been drafted to move export cargoes.

The last informal talks between the government and dock union leaders ended Tuesday with the two sides still far apart.

The spokesman said: "Our doors are still open (for talks) but they have not responded. The

stalemate is continuing."

The dock workers want a 25 per cent pay rise. The government has offered just under 16 per cent.

Minister of State for Surface Transport Rajesh Pilot told parliament the strike was illegal because it began while conciliation proceedings under the industrial disputes law were still underway.

"Government have taken steps to minimise the difficulties that the strike will cause by making arrangements to continue the handling of essential commodities such as crude oil, petroleum products, edible oils and defence cargo," he said.

The government summoned the navy and territorial army on Monday to handle cargoes unloaded by machine.

Businessmen are beginning to feel the pinch and fearing the worst.

K.R.V. Subrahmaniam, president of the Bombay Chambers of Commerce and Industry, said he feared supplies of raw materials

to industry would soon be affected as ships unload at other ports.

"Buyers of Indian goods will take a dim view of what is happening in this country," he said.

India's exports in the 1988/89 financial year ended last March are estimated at 200 billion rupees (\$13.5 billion). The government is hoping to double exports.

Calcutta exporter Lalit Toolidas said India's jute exports, especially commitments to the Soviet Union, could be badly hit by the strike.

Calcutta jute exporters have contracts to deliver up to 40,000 tonnes between April and June to the Soviet Union.

Bombay businessman B.S. Grover said exporters were already jittery about losing contracts.

"There is a need for a long-term solution to the dock labour problem which keeps recurring with sickening regularity, undoing everything on the export front," Grover said.

## Canadian investors bid \$20m for Jerusalem Post

**TEL AVIV (R) —** A Canadian group, including the owner of England's Daily Telegraph, made a surprise bid of \$20 million for the Jerusalem Post, millions more than the next closest bid, newspaper sources said Tuesday.

Israel's Koor Industries, which owns the small but influential English-language daily, received 10 bids for the newspaper, news editor David Richardson told Reuters.

The Jerusalem Post has been assessed as worth about \$3 million, Israeli television reported. It has a daily circulation of 28,000 readers.

The offer by a Canadian group including Daily Telegraph owner Conrad Black was more than twice the bid from British publisher Robert Maxwell and the Canadian Claridge Group headed by Charles Bronfman, the news-

paper sources said. A spokesman for Koor, a troubled Labour federation-owned conglomerate that is selling off assets as part of a recovery plan, said the company was not committed to selling to the highest bidder.

But a newspaper source who spoke on condition he not be named said Koor would be hard pressed to reject a bid so much higher than others.

Other bids included a management buy-out and an offer by Arye Genger, a U.S.-based Israeli businessman with close ties to hawkish Trade and Industry Minister Ariel Sharon.

The Jerusalem Post was founded in 1932. The staff at the left-leaning paper called Tuesday for editorial independence no matter who won the bidding.

## To concentrate on gambling operations

## Ramada agrees to sell hotel group

**PHOENIX (AP) —** Ramada Inc., a hospitality-industry trademark since 1954, has agreed to sell its 825 hotels and motels, change its name and become a gambling operation, the company said Tuesday.

The \$540 million sale to New World Development Co. of Hong Kong will reduce Ramada's holdings to three casinos in Nevada and one in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

In turn, Prime Motor Inns of Fairfield, New Jersey, will pay an undisclosed sum to New World to operate as franchisor of roughly 600 hotels and motels in the United States that are under the Ramada and Rodeway names.

The hotel group has more than 144,000 rooms under the Ramada Inns, Ramada Hotels, Rodeway Inns and Renaissance Hotels Banners. Prime will not act as franchisor for the Renaissance

hotels or any overseas Ramada properties.

Ramada spokesman Joe Cole said company executives expected a return to profitability by concentrating on gaming. He said the new company, still unnamed, had no immediate plans for expansion.

"For the time being, we're going to run the properties we have," Cole said. "We just completed a five-year, \$350 million capital-expansion plan."

The Ramada name will belong to New World, and the gaming company will continue its headquarters in Phoenix, he said.

Ramada announced March 24 that it had agreed to sell its Maric Callender Pie Shops restaurant business. That sale for undisclosed terms will be completed by the end of the month, Cole said. Shareholders in Ramada will get \$7 a share in cash and one-

quarter share in the new gaming company.

The transaction is a major step in Ramada's restructuring plan, begun last October, company chairman Richard Snell said.

"New World and Prime are making a major commitment to achieve success for the 800-plus hotels in the Ramada and Rodeway systems," Snell said in a statement. "The present Ramada Inc. shareholders will benefit from their investment with cash and a continuing interest in the new gaming company."

Cole said the full restructuring would be completed within two to three months.

"It will be about that long before we have the approval of the shareholders, plus getting it through the gaming regulators and making the distribution of the dividend and new stock," Cole said.

Ramada operates the Trop-world Casino and entertainment resort in Atlantic City, recently refurbished for \$200 million and reopened as the largest casino there.

The \$60 million Ramada Express Hotel Casino opened last June in Laughlin, Nevada. The other two holdings are the Tropicana Resort and Casino in Las Vegas and Eddie's Fabulous 50's Casino in Reno.

The new company will employ about 10,000 people, Cole said. Ramada currently employs about 20,000 — half in its gaming operations, 5,600 in the hotel group, and about 3,400 in the restaurant business.

The company lost \$5.1 million in 1988, when it got \$477 million in revenue from casino operations and \$244 million from hotels and motels.

## Tanzania launches 5-year plan to boost growth

**DAR ES SALAAM (R) —** Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi has launched a new five-year development plan aimed at boosting economic growth and overhauling the country's rundown road and rail system.

Mwinyi told parliament in the future inland capital of Dodoma Tuesday night that the 1988-1993 plan would try to push economic growth to six per cent a year in mainland Tanzania and four per cent on the autonomous offshore island of Zanzibar.

"These are big increases considering that the GDP (gross domestic product) has been increasing by 0.8 per cent on the mainland and 2.1 per cent in Zanzibar between 1981 and 1985," he said.

Mwinyi said the new development plan aimed to cut the

budget deficit dramatically, rehabilitate Tanzania's rundown transportation system and boost exports by a third.

The president set socialist Tanzania on a programme of economic liberalisation and reform backed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank soon after coming to power in 1985.

The new five-year development plan represents a continuation of his original three-year economic recovery programme. He said its success would depend on further substantial foreign aid.

Tanzania expects to receive \$800 million worth of aid from Western donors during the current July-June financial year. Mwinyi said Tanzania's agricul-

ture-based economy had picked up thanks to the reforms already implemented and he forecast growth of four per cent this year, up from 3.9 per cent in 1987/88 and 2.9 per cent in 1986/87. Exports were expected to reach \$400 million in 1988-89 financial year, up from \$347 million in 1987-88, he added.

He said the government was cutting the budget deficit to 9.6 billion shillings (\$71 million) this year from 28.5 billion (\$300 million) in 1987/88, but he did give details of how this would be achieved.

Investment would rise over the next five years to 25 per cent of GDP from 23 per cent at present and would be mainly concentrated in the transport sector, he said.

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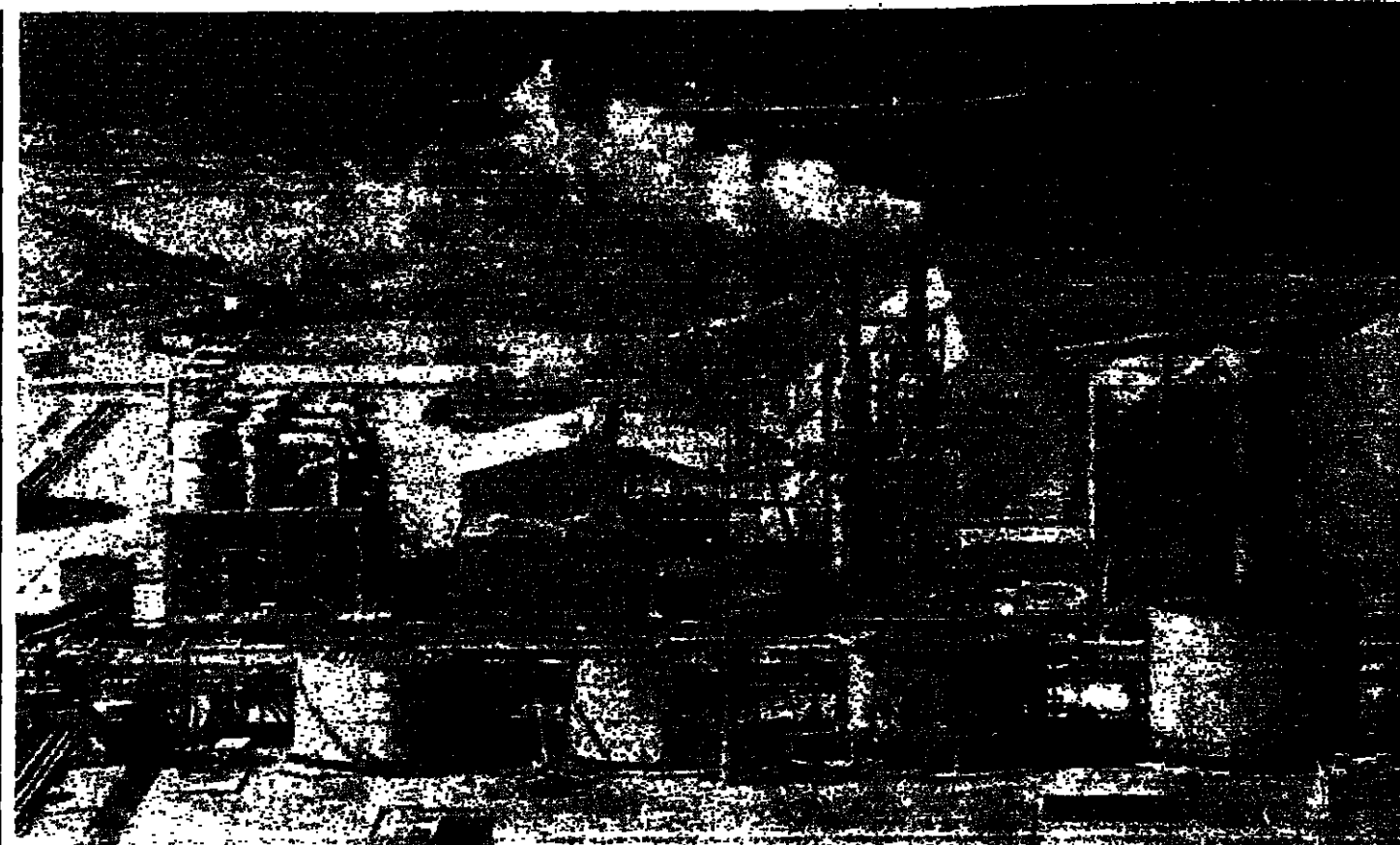
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## Jordan Phosphate Mines Company invites joint venture investments

**AMMAN (J.T.) —** The Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) last year concluded an agreement with Pakistani fertilizer processing companies to produce fertilisers employing phosphate imported from Jordan, according to a company official.

He said that products would be based on phosphoric acid produced by the company in Jordan.

The company also welcomes any future deals with other companies from different countries wishing to enter into joint ventures and employ phosphate mined at Shidieh mines in southern Jordan, the official said.

According to the company official, the government will welcome any joint venture to be established in the Kingdom and will consider it as a development scheme entitling it to all the privileges granted under the encouragement of investment law.

The company director-general Tuesday announced that the company aims to produce up to seven million tonnes of phosphate during 1989.

The director-general also said that the JPMC last year realised a net profit on its sales amounting to JD 22.41 million against JD 4.28 million in 1987.

According to the director, the company last year sold JD 140.9 million worth of phosphate against JD 94.76 million in the previous year.

Most of the phosphate, he said, came from the Wadi Al Abiad, Shidieh and Hassa mines, all located in the southern parts of Jordan.

JPMC transports the phosphate from the mines to the port city of Aqaba by rail and trucks and

company officials earlier stated that plans were being made for boosting the transportation process by rail.

Transport and Telecommunications Minister Khaled Al Haj Hassan earlier this year announced that trucks wishing to transport goods from or to Aqaba will have to transport phosphate from the mines to the port city as a pre-requisite for allowing them to carry on their mission.

### AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday, April 18, 1989 Central Bank official rates			
	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	538.0	542.0	Swiss franc 327.9 331.8
Pound Sterling	918.4	928.2	French franc 85.3 86.1
Deutschmark	288.7	291.6	Japanese yen (for 100) 406.9 410.8
			Dutch guilder 255.9 258.3
			Swedish crown 84.8 85.6
			Italian lira (for 100) 39.3 39.7
			Belgian franc (for 10) 137.9 139.2

### LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

**LONDON (R) —** Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.7107/17	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1863/73	Canadian dollar
	1.8593/602	Deutschmarks
	2.0975/85	Dutch guilders
	1.6340/50	Swiss francs
	38.92/95	Belgian francs
	6.2975/3025	French francs
	1364/1365	Italian lire
	131.95/132.05	Japanese yen
	6.330/80	Swedish crowns
	6.7530/80	Norwegian crowns
	7.2380/430	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	383.00/383.50	U.S. dollars

### WORLD STOCK MARKETS

**SYDNEY —** Shares surged to monthly highs by the close of floor trading and the index recorded its highest gain in over a year as investors returned to the market in droves. By 0515 GMT the All Ordinaries had jumped 27.1 to 1,449.6.

**TOKYO —** Prices firmed to a record close, fluctuating in narrow, featureless trade. Buying was sparked by Wall Street's surge to post-crash highs on optimism interest rates would not be pushed higher. The Nikkei rose 42.17 to a record 33,363.83.

**HONG KONG —** Stocks closed firmer after a session of day-trading which saw strong morning gains followed by profit-taking. The Hang Seng Index rose 28.66 to 3,164.09.

**SINGAPORE —** Prices closed mixed after late profit-taking emerged to wipe out the morning's gains in hectic trading, brokers said. The Straits Times Industrial Index was down 0.72 at 1,256.85.

**BOMBAY —** Share prices closed mixed in alternate bouts of buying and selling with sentiment affected by end-of-account considerations.

**FRANKFURT —** Shares ended mixed to lower as volume dropped off after last week's lively trade but the market's mood remained positive on good corporate results. The DAX Index closed at 1,388.53, off 5.61 points from the previous close.

**ZURICH —** Share prices closed steady to lower as most blue chips came off highs on light profit-taking. The market index of leading shares fell 8.4 to 1,565.6 points.

**PARIS —** Share prices ended firm with trading fairly active despite the end of the April account month Thursday. The 50-share price indicator was 0.47 per cent up after opening 0.28 per cent up.

**LONDON —** Shares closed firm after an active session with more institutional cash in the market. By 1440 GMT, the FTSE 100 stood 9.5 points higher at 2,083.9. By 1400 GMT 518 million leading shares had changed hands, the most for many weeks.

**NEW YORK —** Stocks showed little change in uncertain trading, though volume was moderate to heavy. The Dow was hovering around its close at 2380, a post-crash high, and gaining issues slightly led declines.

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A bus service will be available in most cases. The fee will be JD 150 per term (3 terms per year). There is a registration fee of JD 50 set against the first term's fees.

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